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Foreign Ministers Comment on Baker Talks

LD1103084691 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0145 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Text] Riyadh, 10 Mar (SPA)—Three Arab foreign ministers have considered the meeting held today between the signatories of the Damascus Declaration and the U.S. secretary of state as a unique opportunity to reconfirm the commitment to the search for peace and security in the Middle East. In press statements in Riyadh today the ministers expressed their satisfaction with the positive points in U.S. President George Bush's address about ending the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Shaykh Muhammad Ibn-Mubarak Al Khalifah, Bahraini foreign minister, expressed his hope that today's meeting will be the beginning of a phase of distinguished cooperation that will have positive reflections on the Arab nation's causes. He described the American position toward the Palestinian cause as positive. Shaykh Muhammad Ibn-Mubarak stressed that the Palestinian cause is the cause of all Arabs. He said: "We will always struggle for this cause and for the restoration of the legitimate rights." When asked about the cooperation with Iran he said: "Iran is a neighbor Muslim country, and the Gulf Cooperation Council foreign ministers have conferred with its foreign minister at the United Nations." He added: "We are in contact with Iran."

For his part Mr. Faruq al-Shar', Syrian foreign minister, pointed out that today's meeting discussed the Damascus Declaration and the important issues included in it, with the security of the Arabian Gulf at the forefront, in addition to the pursuit of a just and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian issue on the basis of the relevant UN resolutions and within the context of the international conference under UN auspices.

He said: "Mr. James Baker has confirmed to the eight Arab foreign ministers the commitment of the United States to the ideas included in the recent address by President Bush about the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian issue." He added: "At the meeting there was a commitment to continue the serious action toward a just and comprehensive settlement on the basis of the two UN Security Council resolutions, Nos. 242 and 338."

As for Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, Egyptian deputy prime minister and foreign minister, he stressed that at today's meeting views were completely identical with American views. About the Palestinian issue, he said: "It is a trust bestowed on us, and we are committed to reaching the solution that will secure the legitimate political rights of the Palestinian people." He referred with appreciation to the positive points on the Middle East issue included in President Bush's address.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Iraqi Opposition Forces Continue Conference

Leaders Discuss 'Uprising'

NC1203123791 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0940 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Beirut, 12 Mar (SANA)—The General Conference of the Iraqi Opposition Forces held two sessions in Beirut yesterday. The conference is attended by 300 representatives of the various popular and political parties and organizations opposing the Iraqi regime.

Representatives of the opposition forces delivered speeches at the conference. A political report submitted by the National Action Committee for the Opposition Forces was read out, the goal being to work out specific formulas supporting the popular uprising aimed at bringing down the dictatorial regime, building democracy, and ending discrimination among citizens.

The speeches underlined the need to secure the return of the displaced people, to restore their rights and property, and to compensate them. The speakers called for a just solution of the Kurdish problem, for consolidating the efforts to establish Arab solidarity, and for pressing ahead along the path of unity to achieve the goals of the Arab people and assert the people's aversion to imperialism and Zionism.

Ayatollah Muhammad Taqiy al-Mudarrisi, leader of the Islamic Action Organization, called on the UN Security Council to examine the domestic situation in Iraq in view of the danger that the Iraqi regime may use the weapons of mass destruction against the uprising in Iraq.

In a statement before the opening of the conference, al-Mudarrisi called on world countries to withdraw their recognition of the Iraqi regime because it no longer represents the Iraqi people.

Al-Mudarrisi said that the forces of the Iraqi opposition are the ones that represent the Iraqi people. He said that all countries are called upon to recognize that fact, adding that it is necessary to maintain the unity of Iraq.

In an exclusive statement published in today's edition of the newspaper TISHRIN, al-Mudarrisi said that the Iraqi opposition role was instrumental in preparing the groundwork for the uprising underway in Iraq. From now on, he said, the uprising will need no prodding by the opposition. The latter's role will be to give political, material, and spiritual backing to the uprising and to maintain its momentum. Al-Mudarrisi noted that the uprising took off from al-Basrah in the south to reach Halabjah in the north in less than a week. He said that more than 24 towns are currently under heavy artillery fire by the regime.

In remarks to TISHRIN, Abu-Ashti [name as received], member of the Central Committee of the Iraqi Democratic Party of Kurdistan, affirmed that the uprising is

spreading throughout Iraq and that it is not the monopoly of any certain organization or group. He said the opposition should now pool and activate all its forces and potential in order to maintain the uprising and guarantee its continuation. He stressed the Kurdish movement's concern about the unity of Iraq—territory and people. He said every effort is now required to save Iraq, protect the uprising, and topple the existing regime.

Staff Colonel Ahmad al-Zaydi, who is one of the military officers taking part in the conference, said in a statement to TISHRIN that the atmosphere of the conference is very positive and that there is a large group of Iraqi officers taking part in it. He said the officers are in complete agreement with all other trends participating in the conference. He hoped decisive decisions would be reached to support the uprising and reach conclusions that clarify to world public opinion the Iraqis' insistence on their unity at home and abroad. He said: What is important is for us—military and civilians—is to be able to support the uprising to make it continue. He said: The situation is reassuring and promising.

In a statement, a spokesman for the Iraqi Communist Party said the agenda of the conference will focus on two topics related to supporting and coordinating the uprising in Iraq and ways to bolster the unity of Iraqi opposition.

At 1600 yesterday, the conference continued its work and held an evening session. This session was addressed by Muhammad al-Haydari, representative of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq; Jalal Talabani, leader of the Kurdish Front and secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan; Comrade Dr. Fadil al-Ansari, director the Iraq Affairs Bureau at the National Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and member of the party's Iraq Region Command; Abu-Muhammad al-Ja'fari, representative of the Islamic Call [al-Da'wah al-Islamiyah] Party in Iraq; Rush Shawis [name as received], member of the Political Bureau of the Iraqi Democratic Party of Kurdistan; Shaykh Muhammad Taqiy al-Mudarrisi, head of the Iraqi Islamic Action Organization; and representatives from other Iraqi fronts and parties.

Meet To 'Expedite End' of Saddam Regime

NC1203211891 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] The meeting of the Iraqi opposition forces continued today at the Bristol Hotel in the presence of Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams-al-Din, deputy chairman of the Supreme Islamic Shiite Council, and representatives of Lebanese and Arab forces.

'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Jasim, Kuwait's ambassasdor to Syria and Lebanon, was the first speaker at the morning session held at approximately 1000. He reviewed the practices of Saddam Husayn's regime against the Iraqi and Kuwaiti people, noting the huge losses inflicted on Kuwait as a result of the Iraqi invasion. He affirmed that the practices of Saddam's regime freed the Zionist entity from its isolation. He wished the conference success and voiced his support for the uprising of the Iraqi people.

Scholar 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Hakim delivered a speech.

Scholar Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, chairman of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, delivered a speech in which he said that the uprising in Iraq expresses the general popular mood, rather than constituting the cause of only the opposition organizations. He stressed the need to give the Iraqi people the freedom to chose the system that suits them. He said: We do not want the future state to be a Shiite state.

Salih Dukalah spoke for the Iraqi Democratic Grouping. He said that the democratic option is the framework that gives us, as well as the people of Iraq, freedom of action. Shaykh Zuhayr Kamil addressed the conferees in the name of the Islamic resistance, calling on them to work to topple the Iraqi regime. Shaykh Muhammad ('Asra) delivered a speech on behalf of the militant scholars in Iraq, and called for protecting the uprising so that it will expand.

Muhammad 'Abd-al-Jabbar, speaking on behalf of the Free Iraqi Council, underscored the comprehensive Iraqi nature of the uprising and his concern for rejecting attempts at containment, endorsement, and tutelage. Shaykh Jawad al-Khalisi spoke in the name of the Islamic Bloc, the Soldiers of the Imam Movement, the Iraqi Islamic Grouping, and the Islamic Movement in Iraq. He called for forming committees to provide aid to the uprising. Hasan al-Naqib called on independent nationalists to seek the support of world public opinion, and urged the Armed Forces to join the uprising.

Scholar 'Ali 'Abd-al-'Aziz, speaking in the name of the Islamic Movement in Kurdistan, noted the role of Saddam in destroying Lebanon and called on the opposition to keep away from rancor.

'Abbas Hasan al-Bayati spoke in the name of the Islamic Association of Turkmen, saying that Turkmen is a basic part of the Iraqi people [as heard]. He called on the opposition to support this faction. Iraqi artist Mahmud Sabra affirmed the need to achieve democracy in the future Iraq.

At the end of the meeting, Abu-Talal spoke in the name of the Iraqi tribes. He affirmed the support of the tribes in the south and the north for the intifadah. The delegates will resume their discussions today in preparation for the final session to announce recommendations, resolutions, and positions that will expedite the end of the existing regime in Baghdad.

Fourth Session Held; Committees Formed

NC1303083791 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0630 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] The Iraqi opposition forces conference held its fourth session in Beirut yesterday afternoon. Several speeches expressing the stands of the speakers were made. Abu 'Adnan [not further identified] gave a speech on behalf of

the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command. He called for alliance between the Iraqi people and the Islamic Republic of Iran and other Arab countries to confront the Zionist entity.

Speaking on behalf of the Muslim Kurdish movement [Harakat al-Muslimin al-Akrad], 'Abd-al-Jalil al-Fayli elaborated on Saddam's crimes and persecution of the Iraqi people. He called on the conferees to pay attention to the Kurds who emigrated abroad.

Speaking on behalf of the society in defense of deported Iraqis [Jam'iyat al-Difa' 'An al-'Iraqiyin al-Muhajjarin], 'Abd-al-Jabbar al-'Attar called for establishing a wise revolutionary leadership that expresses the ambitions of all segments of the society.

Afterward, Salim Shakir Mahmud spoke on behalf of the Democratic Iraqi Union [Ittihad al-Dimuqratiyin al-'Iraqiyin] in London. He stressed the importance of the conference that has been convened for the first time where political forces of the Iraqi opposition meet to consider the principles of joint action.

Kurdish writer Ibrahim Ahmad called for safeguarding and defending the Iraqi borders and for preserving Iraqi unity.

'Abd-al-Hamid al-Sharif made a statement on behalf of the Iraqi Nasirite organization [al-Tanzim al-Nasiri al-'Iraqi]. He said that the Iraqi people now possess the resources that will enable them to stand up to the tyrants.

Another figure spoke on behalf of the national Turkman party [al-Hizb al-Watani al-Turkmani]. He called for the establishment of a new Iraqi regime that respects the rights of neighboring countries.

The conference set up the following five committees: The Information Committee in Support of the Uprising; the Political Committee; the Financial Committee; the Committee on Political Concepts; and the Committee on Field Support.

Participants Interviewed

NC1303101091 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0850 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Damascus, 13 Mar (SANA)—The participants in the congress of the Iraqi opposition forces, currently convening in Beirut, have unanimously stressed the need for overthrowing the Iraqi regime and called for the unity of leadership and rank and file to rid the Iraqi people of oppression and persecution.

Today's edition of the newspaper TISHRIN published interviews with a number of participants. They urged the Iraqi Army to join the people's revolution and emphasized the need for not only overthrowing the regime, but also for undermining the regime's ideology, course, and dictums in order to prevent another dictator from assuming power.

Comrade Muhammad Rashad al-Shaykh Radi, representative of the Ba'th Party in Britain, Iraq's branch, said that the Iraqi opposition with all its factions is endeavoring to safeguard Iraq's unity, and anything said to contradict this is an attempt to disintegrate and dismember the popular uprising and torpedo the overwhelming and rising popular feelings against Saddam Husayn's regime.

Speaking about Iraq in the future, Major General Hasan al-Naqib, one of the opposition leaders, said that the confidence in the Iraqi people is boundless and that unity is the only interest of every opposition faction. He added that the congress of the Iraqi opposition forces will not only give moral and information support for the uprising, but will also give it every means of material support to enable it to continue and attain its desired goal, namely overthrowing the regime.

Dr. Muwaffaq al-Rubay'i, representative of the al-Da'wah Party in America and Europe, said: We must record our thanks and appreciation to Syria and its leader President Hafiz al-Asad for his brave stand on the side of the Iraqi people. Our people in Iraq will never forget this stand which expresses pan-Arab and Islamic commitment. Al-Rubay'i reiterated that the congress demonstrates that the uprising is not confined to one faction or one party. It is the uprising of the Iraqi people who have been led by Saddam Husayn to utter defeat in which they have lost 250,000 soldiers.

Albert Yilda, representative of the Assyrian movement, stressed the importance of Iraq's unity and sovereignty, adding: This unity is sacred to the Iraqi opposition and anything contrary to this will only serve Zionism and the enemies of the Arab nation who want a weak, dismembered Iraq and who seek to keep it far away from its sound Arab position alongside Arab Syria in its just struggle against Zionism.

Dr. Sahib al-Hakim, secretary of the Iraqi Human Rights Committee in London, expressed confidence that the Iraqi regime will eventually succumb to the people's will. On the negative effects of Saddam Husayn's practices, al-Hakim said that the harm Saddam Husayn sought to inflict on the Iraqis has gone beyond the geographical boundaries of Iraq to harm the Palestinian people with the help of certain pretenders like Yasir 'Arafat.

Future Meeting in Al-Ta'if Announced

NC1303101791 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] The Iraqi opposition will conclude its first conference in Beirut by drawing up recommendations resulting from its three-day discussions. The opposition will hold another conference in the Saudi city of al-Ta'if in three weeks to agree on a political leadership should President Saddam Husayn remain in power.

Palestinian Affairs

Spokesman Says Baker Meeting 'Very Positive'

NC1303113091 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1042 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Tunis, 13 Mar (MENA)—A PLO official spokesman has described a meeting between U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and a number of Palestinian figures as very positive.

The spokesman said the Palestinian figures emphasized the Palestinian people's insistence on attaining their inalienable national rights, particularly the right of self-determination and the establishment of the independent Palestinian state, which affirm the Palestinian people's supreme national aims. The spokesman said the Palestinian delegation demanded of the U.S. secretary of state that the international legitimate resolutions on Palestine be honored by implementing them.

Abu-Sharif Reportedly Offers Land Concessions

NC1303092291 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0830 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Bassam Abu-Sharif, adviser to the PLO chairman, has stated that the PLO is prepared to launch a new initiative to settle the Palestinian problem. This initiative includes concessions, particularly regarding Palestinian demands related to territory.

Responding to a question by the private Sky News Television, Abu-Sharif pointed out that the PLO will accept less than the whole of the occupied West Bank and the Gaza sector to establish a Palestinian state.

Information Chief Disavows Statement

NC1303115291 Paris AFP in English 1137 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Amman, March 13 (AFP)—The head of the PLO Information Department on Wednesday disavowed a reported statement from another PLO official earlier in the day that the organization was now ready to make concessions to Israel.

Information Chief Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh said the remarks in London by Bassam Abu-Sharif "do not represent" and are "in total contradiction with" the position of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The senior Palestinian representative in Amman, al-Tayib 'Abd-al-Rahim, later said Mr. Abu-Sharif would be "summoned by the PLO leadership" to explain himself.

Mr. Abu-Sharif, a close advisor to PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, told Britain's Sky News Television that in a new peace initiative the organization would be willing to accept "less than the complete West Bank and Gaza Strip" in return for a Palestinian state.

The proposed Palestinian homeland, according to Mr. Abu-Sharif, would be demilitarized for a transition period and would not "automatically be a PLO state headed by 'Arafat."

Mr. 'Abd-Rabbuh, interviewed here by AFP, said "the ideas put forward by Mr. Abu-Sharif are in total contradiction with the position of the PLO as well as that of all national forces inside and outside the occupied territories."

He charged that the statements were "irresponsible" and harmed "the Palestinian national cause."

"The ideas advanced by Mr. Abu-Sharif have been discussed by no official bodies within the PLO," he stressed.

Mr. Abu-Sharif's proposals were also quickly rejected by Israel.

Abu-Sharif Denies Report

NC1303135991 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Telephone interview with Bassam Abu-Sharif, Yasir 'Arafat's adviser, conducted by Muhammad al-Sharif; date and place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Al-Sharif] Mr. Bassam Abu-Sharif: News reports carried statements made by you and broadcast by the Sky News TV network, about a fresh Palestinian initiative. How true is the report?

[Abu-Sharif] Regrettably, these organs seek to convey a severely distorted picture of our stands. The interview I gave to Sky TV is on tape and there is nothing of the kind in it. I would like to make it clear here that there was absolutely no mention of concessions to be made by the PLO. We said that enforcement of UN Security Resolutions 242 and 338—that is, Israel's withdrawal from Palestinian territory—is a key to the Palestinian people's gaining their full right to self-determination and statehood. We also said that the PLO leadership instructed nationalist figures inside the occupied territories to see Baker so that the PLO could demonstrate its intention and desire to contribute to establishing peace based on justice and international legitimacy, and so that they could demand that international legitimacy be applied uniformly, because international legitimacy is indivisible. These figures presented a clear memorandum to Mr. Baker stating that the PLO is the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, that there can be no substitute for the PLO, and that it is a matter only for the Palestinian people to determine their representatives.

[Al-Sharif] Mr. Bassam Abu-Sharif: Is this to say that the PLO still adheres to its previous agendas?

[Abu-Sharif] The PLO put forward a peace initiative to which it still adheres, and is striving for its realization. The initiative envisages two states on the soil of Palestine—a Palestinian state existing alongside Israel.

[Al-Sharif] Does this not mean that the PLO is not coming up with any new ideas?

[Abu-Sharif] The PLO adheres to its initiative and insists on the application of international legitimacy. The PLO also adheres to its democratic practice and its right to choose its leadership. The PLO sticks to the Palestine National Council and the Palestinian people choosing whoever they deem appropriate to lead the march.

[Al-Sharif] So, Mr. Bassam Abu-Sharif, you are thus dismissing out of hand the PLO's making concessions or producing an initiative involving concessions.

[Abu-Sharif] Such news is absolutely baseless.

[Al-Sharif] Incidentally, what do you think of the characterization of the Jerusalem meeting between Baker and a delegation of Palestinian personalities as being positive?

[Abu-Sharif] Without a doubt, we view the meeting as being, in a sense, positive. We see Bush's and Baker's call for the enforcement of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 in a positive light. However, we are waiting for action. The credibility of the U.S. Administration on that score is being tested now. We are waiting to see whether the U.S. Administration applies a single yardstick on international legitimacy and its resolutions or whether it applies a double standard on the Middle East problems.

[Al-Sharif] Judging by initial signs, would you say there are serious moves being made?

[Abu-Sharif] We detect seriousness in Bush's remarks to Congress that the time has come for the application of these resolutions and working out a settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict. We were similarly encouraged by the enthusiastic reception of the statement by Congress. But we will have to wait and see how this works out in practice. We will be prepared to extend every cooperation in the interest of an implementation of international legitimacy and our Palestinian people's right to self-determination and statehood.

[Al-Sharif] Thank you, Mr. Bassam Abu-Sharif.

[Abu-Sharif] Thank you.

'Arafat Defends Support for Saddam, Iraq

PM1203143991 London ITV Television Network in English 1900 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Interview with PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat by correspondent Martin Howe in Tunis; date not given; from the "The World This Week" program—recorded]

[Text] [Howe] Do you not feel that the PLO has been at all damaged by supporting...

['Arafat, interrupting] Damaged?

[Howe] ...His [Saddam Husayn's] cause?

['Arafat] Why? Now, what happened gave the proof that the Palestinian cause is the crux of the whole issue in the Middle East.

[Howe] Looking at President Bush's speech this week to Congress and also Secretary of State Baker's tour of the Middle East at the moment, with his plans for a new Middle Eastern order, they are basically prepared to exclude the PLO—I mean Bush made no reference to the PLO in his speech to Congress.

['Arafat] You have to remember that they had already suspended the dialogue even before the Gulf crisis. Which unmasked that it is not because of the Gulf crisis that they are trying to overjump the Palestinian cause and the PLO, they are trying to avoid it because there is Israeli pressure, you see, Israeli lobby. But now we consider that this statement declared by President Bush is a positive step and we hope that he will carry on, in the same line and by the United Nation auspices, to implement all United Nations resolutions.

[Howe] So, you're not at all concerned that the United States might be looking for other Palestinians to negotiate with, rather than yourself?

['Arafat] With ghosts? This means that they are not going to solve the problem unless they have to deal with the Palestinian people and their representative.

[Howe] Many Arabs are also extremely critical of your support for Iraq, and you've lost financial support, you've lost a lot of political support. Are you at all worried about this?

['Arafat] Actually, we are not facing troubles within the Palestinian field; we are facing troubles in the Arab unity, and this is our drama, our tragedy.

[Howe] And you don't feel that your support for Iraq contributed to that split?

['Arafat] No. Because you have to understand, it is not only the Palestinians who had received the support from Iraq, many Arab countries were supporting, even financial support, military support from Iraq too. [as heard]

[Howe] We've now got the situation where there are many Palestinians being persecuted in Kuwait. Do you feel you are at all responsible for creating the situation in Kuwait?

['Arafat] You know that our community in Kuwait had supported the Kuwaiti citizens during the crisis, and me myself, as an example, has interfered in many of these events to support them.

[Howe] There have been many reports suggesting that you step down as leader of the PLO to make way for a new generation of leaders...

['Arafat, interrupting] Your new order for the regime? This is your democracy for the area? To put your puppets? We haven't pretense, we haven't twistings. We

are proud of our democracy. It is only the Palestinian people who can decide their leadership. Not you personally or any other outside foreign forces.

Soviet Leaders Send 'Arafat 'Important' Message

LD1203182891 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] The brother president and leader Abu-Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine and chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, has received an important message from the Soviet leadership concerning moves in the United Nations relating to international resolutions on the situation in the Middle East, the Palestinian issue, and the Soviet Union's stand after the Gulf crisis and the results it has had at various levels, and the importance of implementing international legitimacy in the Middle East. The message also dealt with recent moves by the U.S. Administration following the speech by President George Bush, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's visit to the area, and the ideas that have been raised and are circulating regarding this.

'Arafat Interviewed on Effects of Gulf War

AU1103144991 Hamburg DER SPIEGEL in German 11 Mar 91 pp 169-173

[Interview with PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat by Volkhard Windfuhr and Olaf Ihlau at the PLO Headquarters in Tunis; date not given: "I Know My Arabs"]

[Text] [DER SPIEGEL] Mr. Chairman, there are two big losers in the Gulf war: Saddam Husayn and his friend Yasir 'Arafat.

['Arafat] No, this is not true. This war has made it clear how important it has become to solve the Palestinian problem. The Gulf war has pushed ahead the solving of this problem.

[DER SPIEGEL] Many people believe, however, that the Palestinian problem has become even more complicated. Why are you so optimistic?

['Arafat] Even though U.S. President George Bush and the heads of state of the member countries of the anti-Iraq coalition claimed that there is no direct link between the Gulf crisis and the problem of our Palestinian people, at the same time Bush and his allies gave assurances that they will deal with the Palestinian problem afterward. Now it will be shown how credible these assurances are.

[DER SPIEGEL] Referring to the formula "land for peace," Bush now at least called on the Israelis to make sacrifices, and met with harsh opposition.

['Arafat] President Bush's speech contained positive approaches to the Palestinian problem, which are suitable as a starting point for a just and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Now an international mechanism must be established to implement the corresponding UN resolutions—without the delay that Israel is trying to achieve to avoid participation in the peace process. With this delaying tactic, Israel is relying on influential circles in the West.

[DER SPIEGEL] But who wants to sit down at the negotiating table with you now?

['Arafat] Is there a different international legitimacy for the Gulf crisis and the Palestinian problem? Is a double standard being applied? We want an international conference, as proposed by the UN General Assembly, to discuss and solve the Palestinian problem.

[DER SPIEGEL] Was it not an enormous mistake to rely so unreservedly on Saddam Husayn?

['Arafat] A liberation movement cannot accept the presence of foreign troops on Arab soil. Please understand: It was Saddam Husayn who supported me without any reservations. He was the first statesman who established a link between oil—the vital juice of the West, Japan, and the rest of the world—and the problem of Palestine.

[DER SPIEGEL] But when Saddam invaded Kuwait, he was not thinking of Palestine.

['Arafat] This is correct. But after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, our people in the occupied territories called on Saddam Husayn to link the oil crisis in the Gulf with the solution of the Palestinian problem, which has been overdue for 43 years now. We conveyed this request. You know that the Arab summit in Cairo was unable to form a high-ranking committee to disentangle the Gulf conflict. Afterward, the Arab world split up.

[DER SPIEGEL] Thus your intervention was unsuccessful.

['Arafat] If the problem had been left to the Arabs, we would have settled it among ourselves. Our standpoint was clear: Iraq withdraws from Kuwait, and the foreign troops leave Arab soil in return. That was the precise issue of our initiative, which I announced at the Cairo summit on 10 August 1990 and which we officially affirmed on 30 August and passed on to the permanent members of the world Security Council, the EC, the nonaligned countries, and the Islamic countries.

[DER SPIEGEL] However, you did not achieve much with this proposal.

['Arafat] Our brethren in Egypt and Saudi Arabia voiced reservations. This made us modify our initiative twice.

[DER SPIEGEL] This did not change anything regarding the rejection in Riyadh and Cairo.

['Arafat] Are you not overlooking the fact that I have been a traditional mediator between Iraq and Kuwait? When there were border skirmishes between Iraq and Kuwait during the time of Iraqi President Hassan al-Bakr, I was able to achieve a cease-fire. It was I who

brought the foreign ministers of the two countries together. I also mediated in the war between Iran and Iraq.

[DER SPIEGEL] This time you did not have any luck.

['Arafat] But I tried. When the release of the hostages was at stake, my good contacts with Saddam Husayn were very useful for some Europeans—I do not want to give any names. Three times I went to Baghdad with (Soviet Middle East special envoy) Primakov—at the express request of the Soviet Government—to save peace.

[DER SPIEGEL] Your efforts met with little appreciation by the Kuwaitis, for instance.

['Arafat] Our initiative proceeded from the premise that the Iraqi troops should withdraw step by step. We never claimed that Kuwait is part of Iraq. But our proposals were passed over and ignored.

[DER SPIEGEL] Why did you yourself, even after the outbreak of the ground war, continue to enthusiastically praise Saddam Husayn's struggle "against the American dictatorship" and swear that the Palestinians were standing with the Iraqis in the trenches?

['Arafat] I support any Arab country that defends itself against foreign troops. In 1956 I fought in the Egyptian Army as an officer against the Anglo-French-Israeli aggressors, who had attacked Egypt during the so-called Suez crisis. I am still proud of that. I will always act in this way if an Arab country is attacked; otherwise I would not be Yasir 'Arafat. This is the way I am.

[DER SPIEGEL] What we do not understand is: How can a man with your political experience link his fate with that of a political loser like Saddam Husayn?

['Arafat] I have good relations with all Arab leaders. I am the most senior leader after King Husayn of Jordan and King Hassan of Morocco.

[DER SPIEGEL] But some Arab heads of state do not want to have anything to do with you now.

['Arafat] Who told you that?

[DER SPIEGEL] This is the impression conveyed by the newspapers in Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere.

['Arafat] Yes, because I did not join the attack on Iraq. If I had done that, the other 10 Arab states would have been angry with me. In the end, I am guided by the national standpoint.

[DER SPIEGEL] However, those Arabs whom you disappointed are the winners.

['Arafat] Well, you know, in 1956 the British and the French defeated Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir in military terms, but never in political terms. The hurricane that was caused by this was enormous. And it will not abate in this part of the world now.

[DER SPIEGEL] What have Saddam Husayn and you achieved? The United States is practically a hegemonic power in the Middle East and controls the oil fields.

['Arafat] The Americans only wanted the oil, they are busily thinking of two things: the confrontation with united Europe beginning in 1992 and the conflicts with the economic superpowers Japan and Germany.

[DER SPIEGEL] Accordingly, Saddam Husayn would have been taken in by the Americans when he provided them with the justification for an intervention?

['Arafat] Correct. Saddam Husayn fell into the U.S. trap. Nevertheless, the United States would not have been able to unite all these armies if the other superpower, the Soviet Union, had not collapsed. In the past, the United States was not even able to do something about Cuba.

[DER SPIEGEL] Why do the Palestinians always choose the wrong friends?

['Arafat] Very simple: Because we have been hearing only promises for 43 years. And we are still refugees without a homeland.

[DER SPIEGEL] Your solidarity with Saddam Husayn, who wanted the destruction of Israel, is also wont to destroy the credibility of your own statement in 1988, when you recognized Israel's right to exist.

['Arafat] Saddam only said: If they attack us, we will retaliate and we will react accordingly to the use of nonconventional weapons. Your German companies knew that he had these nonconventional weapons. But despite his difficult situation, he did not use them.

[DER SPIEGEL] Because he did not want to or because he was no longer able to do that?

['Arafat] He could have certainly armed at least one of his missiles with a nonconventional warhead. Saddam said: If Israel participates in the war, we will destroy it. But if it withdraws from the occupied territories, Iraq will also withdraw from Kuwait. This would have been the beginning for solving all problems in the region. The United States and Europe are now trying to mollify the Arab masses. But there will be no peace as long as the problem of the Palestinians remains unsolved.

[DER SPIEGEL] We really cannot see an uprising of the Muslim masses, rather we see depression and frustration. Certainly, there were mass demonstrations in Bangladesh and Morocco, but not in Egypt.

['Arafat] Yes, yes, the masses need time. This is a movement that is as slow as that of the Nile. But beware of it if it floods its banks. In Germany, too, it took years until the Wall fell. Just wait and see.

[DER SPIEGEL] You called George Bush "the Nero of our time." Do you believe that the U.S. President wants to do political business with you once gain?

['Arafat] This is his business. With whom should one negotiate, if not with the enemy? Even before the Gulf crisis, Bush severed relations with us. (Footnote: From the end of 1988 to mid-1990 there were contact talks between the PLO and the U.S. ambassador in Tunis, which did not yield any results and were canceled by Washington) but not with the Israelis, who are to blame for the genocide of the Palestinian people.

[DER SPIEGEL] The Americans are now obviously seeking a Palestinian solution that bypasses the PLO.

['Arafat] Is the appointment of new rulers and people's representatives the basic democratic line of the New World Order? For me this is hegemony and slavery.

[DER SPIEGEL] Let us say it is realpolitik.

['Arafat] We Palestinians have suffered many occupiers—beginning with the Romans. Slave leader Spartacus also was a Palestinian, did you know that? Like St. Peter!

[DER SPIEGEL] Both died.

['Arafat] Do you mean that St. Peter was a loser? This shows the materialistic mentality of the West, while our mentality is rooted in the soil of the religions based on revelations.

[DER SPIEGEL] Once again back to the Palestinian problem: How do you want to make progress, if important Arab states reject you as the spokesman of the PLO?

['Arafat] It would not be the first time. But it will wear off; I know my Arabs. People have tried repeatedly to split us, but we do not have a Petain or a Quisling in our ranks. The Palestinians themselves decide who represents the Palestinian people.

[DER SPIEGEL] Is there not increasing competition from fundamentalist extremists, like the "Hamas" [Islamic Resistance Movement]?

['Arafat] Who says that we are against Hamas? Hamas is part of us. The PLO is a democratic-pluralistic movement, the most democratic movement in the entire Arab region. We have communists, socialists, and liberals. Why should we not also have followers of the Jihad?

[DER SPIEGEL] What does the fundamentalist wave, which is now rolling across the Middle East, leave of your laicist dreams?

['Arafat] This does not alarm me at all, this should rather be the West's concern. But what has happened now with the destruction of Baghdad—more hegemony, suppression, and injustice—has caused profound bitterness among the Arab people and will doubtlessly give rise to a wave of extremism.

[DER SPIEGEL] And will you not be one of the first victims?

['Arafat] I got my post not with tanks but because of the will of the people. Would you accept it if Washington told you whom to appoint chancellor?

[DER SPIEGEL] Major Arab newspapers say: 'Arafat is a card that has to be burned.

['Arafat] If those writers believe this, okay. The blood in this struggle has not yet cooled down. But the changes will spread to the entire region.

[DER SPIEGEL] Apart from the political disaster that the Palestinians are now facing....

['Arafat] ...I would like to tell you something: One should not offend national and religious feelings. The Western seismographs ignore the tremor that is already spreading from the Arab volcano. What a pity. My problems are only very small; the entire region is boiling. But I am a man who recognizes the historical point of view, and my concern is a historical one. We established the culture around the Mediterranean together. You Europeans must finally understand this.

[DER SPIEGEL] With due respect to your awareness of history: First of all, your people are facing big social problems as a result of the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs in the Gulf states and in the territories occupied by Israel.

['Arafat] The most prosperous Palestinian colony abroad was that in Kuwait. There alone we lost $11 billion. But is it not a shame for the German Government that it is now paying money to all those who suffered damage in the Gulf war, but that it excludes the Palestinian people? These Palestinian people owe part of their suffering to German history.

[DER SPIEGEL] However, the Palestinians also benefit from German money via UN institutions.

['Arafat] Oh, really? These are peanuts. Every Scandinavian country pays more to the Palestinians than the economic superpower Germany. No, this is a shame for the Germans. Have we ever hurt the German people?

[DER SPIEGEL] The 170,000 Palestinians are now threatened with reprisals; maybe there will be a massacre like the one in Beirut in the past.

['Arafat] I do not think so. We Palestinians in Kuwait refused to carry arms and to serve in the Iraqi Army. This was our decision. If we had taken up arms, the U.S. Marines would probably have suffered a fate similar to that of the Israelis in Beirut. We held them off for three months.

[DER SPIEGEL] The first excesses in Kuwait have been committed against Palestinians who are suspected of having collaborated with the Iraqi occupiers.

['Arafat] Unfortunately yes. Bush and all governments of the alliance are responsible for that. We will not forget that.

[DER SPIEGEL] What do you recommend to your friend Saddam Husayn today?

[Arafat] I recommend to him to take care of his people and to preserve Iraq's territorial integrity and unity. May God help this country, which had five times as many bombs dropped on it as Germany during World War II, in its reconstruction.

[DER SPIEGEL] You do not worry about your own future?

['Arafat] I am the conscience of the Arab nation; I represent its most sacred concern. Minor things will not distract me from the strategic goal. Christ, too, went through the Via Dolorosa, and later his message was spread all over the world.

[DER SPIEGEL] Yasir 'Arafat, the artist in political survival, will also master this crisis?

['Arafat] This is a crisis? I have experienced much worse.

[DER SPIEGEL] Mr. Chairman, thank you for this interview.

Egypt

Mubarak Holds Airport Discussion 12 Mar

Views Arms Reduction

NC1203105691 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1000 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 12 Mar (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has pointed out that arms reduction in the Middle East can take place when there is complete stability and peace in the region. He said: We can talk about the issue of armament and its minimal level to ensure self defense and not offensive capability. In a statement to reporters today before Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni's stopover at Cairo Airport, Mubarak said: "As long as there is tension in the region, I must have weapons to be ready to defend the country."

Responding to a question on whether Israel will comply with that, Mubarak said that this will be decided and everyone will be committed to it, since there could not be a situation where one country abides by the decision and another does not.

Comments on Partitioning Iraq

NC1203125391 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1145 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 12 Mar (MENA)—After saying goodbye to Ugandan President Museveni today, President Mubarak announced to reporters that Egypt is opposed to any attempt to partition Iraq and that it will stand firmly against any attempts. Asked about a message he may like to address to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir, President Mubarak said: The message that I may address now is that what has happened in the Middle East, the Gulf crisis, and all events affirm that peace is an important process and we must find a solution to the Palestinian issue, because we can never live in peace as long as this issue remains unresolved, as it is the crux of problems in the region.

Asked about Israel's sticking to the May 1989 initiative, particularly since certain Israelis make statements affirming that they will hold on to the Golan Heights, President Mubarak said that this is considered to be a negotiating position, but sticking to a certain position means that there are preconditions. We are looking for a way of solving the issue without preconditions. They themselves maintain an attitude that there should be no preconditions. Perhaps what they are declaring is a negotiating position. However, I hope that we will reach a solution based on logic because not only will the Arab nation and the countries of the region benefit from peace, but Israel will also.

Responding to a question on existing fears over partitioning Iraq, perhaps for ideological reasons, President Mubarak said: Let us be clear. Having sided with Kuwait or with principles and fought the occupation of Arab land by force does not mean that we support partitioning Iraq. He said: We will stand with utmost firmness with Iraq as one unified country. We will under no circumstances agree that as a result of this position Iraq should be partitioned into states. With all clarity and frankness we are against this.

Responding to a question on reports about Iran's anger after the Damascus Declaration, Iran's exclusion from security arrangements in the region, and whether there are various stages for regional security arrangements, President Mubarak said: No one says that Iran is excluded from the region, because it is a country on the other side of the Gulf. He pointed out that when conditions are propitious and relations are good, there will be nothing to prevent reconsidering Iran's position. He stressed that Egypt is not against Iran or any other country. We want peace in the region, he said, in order to devote efforts to achieve development for the region's people.

Asked if the PLO is still the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people regardless of its leadership, President Mubarak said: The PLO leadership is not our business. It is the PLO that chooses its leadership and neither we nor any country has the right to interfere to change the PLO leadership, because this is absolutely not our business. We do not interfere in the domestic affairs of any country. Some people say that the Iraqi people do not want Saddam, but we do not interfere in this. We do not interfere in the affairs of any people who choose their leader. They are free. When the Sudanese people agreed on al-Bashir, they were free. We do not interfere in the domestic affairs of any country. As for whether or not the PLO is the legitimate representative, this was an Arab summit resolution. No Arab head of state can abandon this resolution because we are all committed to the resolutions, or else there will be no need for the Arab League nor for its resolutions.

Responding to a question on several countries refusing to cooperate with the PLO and the obstacles this could create, President Mubarak noted that in fact the behavior of some PLO leaders had not been up to required standards. He said that some of them attacked Egypt, saying that while it did not stay in the war more than six days, Iraq could fight on for three and even six years. President Mubarak added: The ground war did not take more than 100 hours; actually, it took 48 hours. He added: "We are not gloating over anyone."

President Mubarak pointed out that when President Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir found during the Six-Day War that his country and infrastructure could be destroyed and that more of his people might be killed, he agreed to the cease-fire to protect the people. After that, Egypt stood fast for four years in the war of attrition. He stressed that the "1967 war was not a six-day war." He added: We do not want to talk about this issue more than that because we do not want anyone to say that we are gloating. We did not want this war to happen in the first place, and we spoke and gave advice to prevent it. No one advised Iraq and its president more than Egypt. I sent him more than

30 oral and written messages; in fact, I sent him an oral message three days before the ground war started, telling him to accept the conditions in order to protect his army and people, but the result was more insults from his information minister. We did not respond to this, because we do not follow such methods. President Mubarak noted that what he had cautioned and warned against had taken place, and this was not some sort of fortune-telling—but based on his experience, he expected all of this.

President Mubarak was then asked whether the atmosphere was now appropriate for holding an international conference. He stressed that first there must be a period of confidence-building among the parties concerned. Then the conference must be well planned so that representatives of the parties concerned can talk about how the dialogue within the conference will proceed; then the conference could be held.

He added: The conference must be well planned; otherwise, it will certainly fail. He noted that if the parties concerned go to an international conference at the present time, there would be rejection on all sides.

Asked about the credibility of the Iraqi president and his regime as far as Egypt and the world are concerned, President Mubarak said: We have no confidence in the Iraqi president and his regime, and they have lost their credibility before the world. However, no one is entitled to talk about matters that concern changing one president for another.

Mubarak Consults With Saudi Commander

NC1203190891 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1715 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 12 Mar (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received Lieutenant General Khalid Bin-Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, commander of the joint forces and the Saudi theater of operations, at the presidential office in Heliopolis tonight.

Lt. Gen. Safiy-al-Din Abu-Shinaf, the Egyptian Armed Forces chief of staff, attended the meeting.

Following the meeting, Lt. Gen Khalid said: I had the honor of meeting President Mubarak to convey to him the thanks and gratitude of the Joint Forces Command, which the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques has honored me with commanding. The heads of states have also honored me with commanding these forces, including the Egyptian ones which were a major factor in achieving victory very quickly. He added that he presented President Mubarak some reports on the Egyptian forces operating there.

Regarding the estimated number of forces required to maintain peace in the area—whether Egyptian, Syrian, or Gulf Cooperation Council forces—Prince Khalid said: In military parlance, the number depends on the extent of the gravity of the threat. However, as military commanders, we cannot go into this matter, because the instructions come from the leaders of our countries.

Prince Khalid expressed the hope "like every Arab" that the Iraqi people will choose what is good for them. He said: We all know what Iraq's dictator has done, which certainly was not in his people's interest. He expressed hope that a wise government would be set up there that will have the same love we have for the Iraqi people.

He stressed that it will be impossible to deal with Saddam Husayn in the future. He noted that he is only reiterating what the Saudi defense minister has said—namely, that it is impossible to cooperate with a madman such as Saddam.

Asked when he expects the end of the Iraqi ruler—from his military standpoint—Prince Khalid replied: I have already said that I do not expect Saddam Husayn to exist for more than two months.

USSR Envoy Carries Gorbachev Message to Mubarak

NC1203232291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1640 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 12 Mar (MENA)—Soviet Ambassador Vladimir Polyakov conveyed a message from Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev to President Husni Mubarak during a meeting this evening.

In a statement after the meeting, the Soviet ambassador said the message concerns the Soviet assessment of the situation in the region and contains some Soviet ideas concerning the Gulf and the Middle East in the postwar era, as well as other ideas connected with the need to expedite a peaceful settlement in the Middle East. He added that the message is within the framework of the good relations between Egypt and the Soviet Union.

Asked if President Mubarak had briefed him on his talks with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, Polyakov said he discussed all issues in general with President Mubarak. He pointed out that the United States informed the Soviet Union of the results of the Riyadh talks, and added that he had met with Baker's aides in Cairo two days ago.

Asked if the Soviet Union supports an international conference, a regional conference, or direct talks between the Palestinians and Israelis, Polyakov said the Soviet Union's policy on an international conference remains unchanged. He said it constitutes an appropriate means to achieve a peaceful settlement in the region at which all parties to the conflict could discuss all issues, chief among which is the Palestinian issue.

The envoy stressed the Soviet Union's prominent role in the Middle East, adding that no positive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict can be found without the Soviet Union, which supports its Arab friends.

Regarding the situation in Iraq in the postwar era, Polyakov said that the Iraqi people are now determining

their own future. After that, we will see what relations with Iraq will be like. He stressed that Iraqi territory must not be touched, and that Iraq must live in peace and harmony with all its neighbors in the region.

Security Forces Uncover Iraqi 'Terrorist Plan'

NC1203204991 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1420 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 12 Mar (MENA)—Security agencies have unmasked a new Iraqi terrorist plan to carry out terrorist acts against important installations and densely populated areas in Egypt attempting to disturb domestic security in response to Egypt's position on Iraq's occupation of Kuwait.

The plan was revealed in a statement by Interior Minister Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Musa. He stated that the Iraqi regime recruited some Egyptians working in Iraq, after having failed in its earlier attempts to send some pro-regime elements of various nationalities to Egypt to carry out the terrorist acts. These elements fell into the hands of security men upon their arrival in Egypt, he added.

In a statement to journalists today, the interior minister revealed that one of the honest Egyptians whom the Iraqi regime attempted to recruit informed Egyptian authorities of the details of this plan upon his return to Egypt from Iraq. This helped uncover 20 Egyptians whom Iraq had recruited upon their arrival in separate groups via Nuwaybi' Port.

The interior minister said that in addition to financial benefits, the Iraqi regime used inhumane methods to recruit the Egyptians and force them to carry out the terrorist acts they had been assigned to. Those who have been arrested gave all the details of the terrorist scheme, the opertions they had been assigned to, and the methods used in recruiting them.

The interior minister pointed out that security agencies took all the necessary security measures to arrest these elements after the honest Egyptian citizen gave details of the operations planned by the Iraqi regime. He noted that these elements were arrested at Nuwaybi' Port coming from Iraq in possession of explosives and the plans of the operations they intended to carry out in Egypt. They gave full confessions upon their arrest, and were referred to the public prosecutor.

The interior minister noted that the defendants admitted that the Iraqi regime recruited other elements to carry out terrorist acts in Egypt. He stressed that the security men in Egypt are on high alert and are prepared to foil these schemes and safeguard security and stability in Egypt.

Other Groups Present

NC1103225891 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2240 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 11 Mar (MENA)—The Interior Ministry's security organs have arrested a terrorist group of five Iraqis and Egyptians attempting to infiltrate into Egypt via the Nuwaybi' Port with a load of explosives.

During interrogation, the suspects admitted that they came to Egypt with the objective of carrying out terrorist operations and that there is another terrorist group on its way to Egypt.

Meanwhile, the Interior Ministry has taken strict security measures along all border points to thwart any infiltration attempts.

U.S. Pressuring Egypt To Not Use Nuclear Power

PM1303101391 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 5 Mar 91 p 5

[Fayiz Zayid and 'Adil al-Bahnasawi report: "U.S. and Western Pressures To Prevent Egypt From Implementing Nuclear Energy Program"]

[Text] AL-SHA'B has learned from well-informed sources at the Electricity and Energy Ministry that Egypt is being subjected to U.S. and Western pressures to prevent it from implementing the nuclear energy program for peaceful purposes. The pressures include forcing Egypt to expand the use of coal in generating energy.

The sources emphasized that Egypt's coal reserves do not exceed 30 million tonnes, from which a 1,000-megawatt station consumes some 3 million tonnes a year at a cost of $160 million. Whereas a station of the same capacity needs only 30 tonnes of uranium a year at the cost of $40 million a year.

The discussions of the Consultative Council's Industry and Energy Committee, which were attended by Electricity and Energy Minister Engineer Mahir Abazah, revealed that the United States does not want Egypt to enter the age of nuclear energy and has put pressure on the World Bank and some states to stop them from helping Egypt set up nuclear reactors to be used to generate energy.

The sources warned that expansion in the use of coal and oil in Egypt would cause an environmental and economic catastrophe, causing a rise in the temperature and producing dangerous substances like acid rain and methane gas. [as published]

Meanwhile, the board of directors of the nuclear stations authority held a meeting under Eng. Mahir Abazah. Dr. 'Ali al-Sa'idi, chairman of the authority, said that the board argued the need to use nuclear energy in generating electricity in Egypt. The board warned against the environmental problems caused by the effects of oil and coal.

Sudan

Democratic Unionist Leader on Regime's Policy

PM1103114791 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 7 Mar 91 p 6

[Interview with al-Sharif Zayn-al-'Abidin al-Hindi, secretary general of the Sudanese Democratic Unionist Party, by Muhammad al-Fal in Jeddah; date not given]

[Excerpts][passage omitted][al-Fal] What are the Sudanese opposition's plans and program at present?

[Al-Hindi] We Sudanese love democracy and would not feel mentally or materially comfortable unless we were living in such an atmosphere. That is, on condition that it should not lead to chaos, but, instead, solidarity. There have been three successive military regimes. That kind of regime denies us that right in life and makes decisions derived from its own convictions and implements them by force.

We spontaneously resist and reject that kind of regime. We have succeeded in that regard twice in our contemporary history: October 1964 and April 1985.

These military regimes have their own ways of staying in power, but we are resisting and struggling to get rid of them.

Our program is to unite the people ruled by force and repression in order to restore to our homeland the democratic spirit without which we cannot live.

[Al-Fal] Who are the people ruled by force and repression?

[Al-Hindi] All Sudanese parties, pulpits, and influential politicians, like the Ummah Party, the Democratic Unionist Party, and the other parties.

[Al-Fal] Do you regard Garang as one of these influential figures and parties?

[Al-Hindi] The Garang group is a movement which was established long ago. And it must be taken into account in order to change its combat practices by sitting downm with it to clarify the existing problems with a view to resolving them.

[Al-Fal] Excuse me, is Garang a party to your program for toppling the al-Bashir regime?

[Al-Hindi] Garang signed the charter of the Democratic National Grouping. And that was achieved as a result of the dialogue held with him before the military regime seized power. It was achieved through what was termed initiatives and meetings. As a result, Garang found his views close to numerous northern views. He signed the charter with the aim of resolving the problem that led to the fighting.

Our programs at this stage are derived from past experiences that have proved that there are elements which brought about things inconsistent with the nature of Sudan's fabric and feelings. These elements are following the tide of extremism. The moderate Sudanese went along with these elements in the past stage, and we are now seriously examining these elements with a view to eliminating the extremism on both left and right—the extremism whose elements seized power from 1969 and 1989.

In the first period they said they had unusual justice for the Sudanese people and in the second period they said they had a different Islam. [passage omitted]

[Al-Fal] Sudan's position on the Gulf incidents surprised many people. How would you assess that position in terms of political calculations?

[Al-Hindi] The Khartoum government's position is the outcome of a series of errors. It is, however, a fatal position. In fact I believe it is a suicidal mistake. Had al-Bashir not adopted that position, he would have taken root in Sudan for many years to come. But it was Almighty God's will for him to adopt that erroneous position.

To explain that position it must be pointed out that al-Bashir is an extension of an international fundamentalist movement that has roots in the various Islamic and Arab countries. It is a movement seeking to seize power in the Arab and Islamic countries. It has aims and is working to realize them. And for that purpose it is pleading to an Arab leader to strike at the region in order to inherit power after him. These are the calculations on which al-Bashir based his position, on the grounds that he represents an ideological organization that has its own links and coordination. That organization expected Saddam to achieve some of its aims for it, which is why it declared him a Muslim and an Islamic and Arab leader. [passage omitted]

Bahrain

Amir Receives Letter From Gorbachev 12 Mar

NC1203110091 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1006 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Manama, 12 Mar (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, amir of Bahrain, has received a letter from Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev, in which the Soviet president expressed his satisfaction over the liberation of Kuwait and the return of legitimacy there, as well as the end of the Gulf war.

In his letter, the Soviet president emphasized that the Soviet Union will continue to work for the enforcement of UN Security Council resolutions and legitimacy.

Gorbachev also expressed the Soviet Union's concern to forge close ties and cooperation with Bahrain in their bilateral interest and in the interest of world peace.

The letter was handed over by Konstantin Kharchev, the Soviet ambassador in the United Arab Emirates, when he called on the amir this morning. Kharchev had arrived in Manama earlier in the day on a two-day visit to Bahrain.

Kuwait

Defense Minister Comments on Security Situation

LD1303122191 (Clandestine) Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1000 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Minister of Defense Shaykh Nawwaf al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah has announced that studies are under way to rebuild Kuwait's Army on modern and sophisticated foundations to thwart any future aggression. He indicated that this Army will form a part of the armed forces of the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] and sisterly Arab states.

In an exclusive interview published today in the Qatari AL-RAYAH, Shaykh Nawwaf al-Ahmad stated that the Kuwaiti Army will be supplied with very sophisticated and technological advanced weapons from various sources in accordance with Kuwait's needs, its present and future requirements, and in view of the repercussions of its bitter experience from the Iraqi invasion and occupation.

The defense minister strongly denied that military mistakes were made before the Iraqi invasion. He stressed that the Kuwaiti Army was well prepared and was supplied with all the necessary requirements. This Army applied for modern and very sophisticated weapons; however, these weapons failed to arrive on time.

He said that Arab leaders demanded from His Excellency the Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah that the Kuwaiti Army should not be provoked and blamed for carrying out a provocative action against Iraqi authorities. He added that despite all this, members of the Kuwaiti Armed Forces stood up valiantly following the invasion in the face of Iraqi forces until their ammunition was exhausted, despite the noticeable difference in numbers and preparations between Kuwaiti and Iraqi forces.

Regarding the date of departure of U.S. forces from Kuwait, Shaykh Nawwaf al-Ahmad stressed to AL-RAYAH that the joint forces will leave Kuwait once their mission ends and when Iraq responds to all United Nations Security Council resolutions.

As for the probability of Kuwait's continuous need for the presence of U.S. forces in the Gulf region to consolidate the foundations of peace and security, the defense minister said this matter will be decided by the political leadership in light of security considerations and in cooperation with GCC and sisterly Arab states in the service of stability in the region, whether these forces are U.S., Arab, UN, or neutral forces.

Shaykh Nawwaf al-Ahmad pointed out that during GCC defense ministers meeting, there were calls for changing the security strategy and laying down a new regional strategy to achieve the desired goals in light of the developments witnessed in the Gulf.

The minister of defense expressed hope that there would be excellent relations aimed at uniting and organizing the Arab house in view of the developments in the life of the Arab nation during these crucial circumstances.

Shaykh Nawwaf al-Ahmad reiterated Kuwait's moral, material, and political support for the Palestinian cause and that Kuwait will not let down the Palestinian people and their just cause until their country is liberated from the claws of Israeli occupation.

Regarding the current disturbances in Iraq, the defense minister stressed that Kuwait does not interfere in the internal affairs of Iraq and that the Iraqi people know the type of regime they desire for themselves.

During the interview, Shaykh Nawwaf al-Ahmad praised the stance of the Kuwaiti people during the Iraqi occupation and stressed that all the people living inside Kuwait formed part of the resistance through the declaration of civil disobedience and the refusal to heed orders from occupation forces. He indicted that members of the resistance who confronted the Iraqi invasion are now cooperating with the Kuwaiti Armed Forces and security people by directing them toward arms and ammunition caches. With regard to weapons belonging to resistance members, the minister of defense said that once the Kuwaiti legitimate authority, the security people, and Armed Forces returned to the country, the role of the resistance would end. It will hand over this role to the authorities, and consequently all its weapons will be collected.

Regarding clearing Kuwaiti coasts of mines planted by the Iraqi forces during the occupation period, the minister of defense said that Kuwait is facing tremendous

difficulties. However, a team of experts in this field is dealing with the matter, and the joint forces have started clearing coasts after having received mine maps. He expressed his hope that this operation will be completed soon.

Opposition Abandons 'Hard-Line Stance'

NC1103154891 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 11 Mar 91 pp 18, 14

[By 'Abd-al-Karim al-Barghuthi]

[Text] The Kuwaiti opposition has abandoned its hard-line stance against the decree Kuwaiti Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad issued in exile. The decree imposes martial law for three months and appoints Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah, prime minister and heir apparent, as general martial law administrator.

In a telephone conversation with SAWT AL-SHA'B from London, the opposition sources have said that the development in their position is a result of a letter from "traditional" opposition leader 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Saqr, chairman of the Kuwaiti chamber of commerce and industry, to the organizers of the opposition meeting to be held in London this week. In his letter, al-Saqr called for waiting a while and postponing the meeting to allow an opportunity for the contacts and consultations that are being held with Shaykh Sa'd in Kuwait and his highness the amir in al-Ta'if. A decision on what should be done will emerge at the end of these meetings.

The same sources have revealed that al-Saqr also sent a letter to the heir apparent, calling on him to submit the resignation of his current government and work with the amir to form a new national unity goverment whose majority would be cadres and qualified Kuwaitis who remained in the homeland throughout the months of the ordeal, according to the letter.

'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Saqr called on the heir apparent and general martial law administrator to assume his responsibility toward what he called internal sedition that intends to organize arbitrary measures against the Palestinian community. He noted the important, vital role played by the sons of Palestine in the service of Kuwait, as the anchor of its scientific, construction, and administrative awakening.

Replying to a question by SAWT AL-SHA'B, the sources said that all powers and movements participating in organizing the opposition meeting have welcomed al-Saqr's letter. Al-Saqr is regarded as the traditional leader of the opposition and the spiritual father of the 1962 Constitution, because he was among those who legislated it.

The sources stressed there is a consensus on the need for the amir and the heir apparent to commit themselves to this Constitution in restoring public life for the Kuwaiti people. The sources also stressed that all must adhere to Article 69 of the Constitution on imposing and applying martial law.

It is noteworthy that this article stipulates the following:

The amir declares martial law under the necessary conditions dictated by the law and its provisions. Martial law is declared by a decree that will be brought before the parliament within the next 15 days for discussion.

If this were to take place when the parliament was dissolved, then the issue must be presented before the new parliament at its first meeting.

Prime Minister Receives Italy's De Michelis

LD1003144791 London KUNA in Arabic 1415 GMT 10 Mar 91

[Formerly Kuwait KUNA]

[Excerpt] Kuwait, 10 Mar (KUNA)—His Highness Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, the Kuwaiti heir apparent and prime minister, today received Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs Gianni de Michelis and his accompanying delegation on the occasion of their visit to Kuwait. [passage omitted]

Qatar

Government Cancels Share of Egypt's Debt

NC1303010191 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1347 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 12 Mar (WAKH)—The State of Qatar has officially informed Egypt that it has canceled its share of Egypt's debts to the Gulf Development Agency in Egypt. Qatar thus becomes the first Gulf state to cancel its portion of Egypt's debts to the agency.

Qatari Ambassador in Cairo Badr 'Umar al-Dafa' delivered an official letter to this effect from the Qatari Government to Egyptian Finance Minister Dr. Muhammad al-Razzaz today.

The Gulf Development Agency was established by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates on 9 January 1979 with capital of $2 billion.

Qatar canceled all Egypt's bilateral debts late last year.

Saudi Arabia

Council Considers Damascus Summit, Baker Talks

LD1103213691 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1608 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Riyadh, 11 Mar (SPA)—His Royal Highness Crown Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, deputy prime minister and commander of the National Guard, chaired the Council of Ministers session. After the meeting Minister of Information 'Ali al-Sha'ir made the following statement to SPA:

At the beginning of the session the council listened to His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, minister of foreign affairs, who gave a comprehensive report on the contents of the Damascus Declaration which was released after the meeting of the eight foreign ministers of Egypt, Syria, and the Gulf Cooperation Council states and also on the contents of the final meeting of the foreign ministers of these countries with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker yesterday in Riyadh.

Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal explained that the common denominator of these meeetings affirmed the importance of joint action to prevent the repetition of an aggression similar to what happened to Kuwait; to work in accordance with the Arab League and UN Charters; to adhere to the aims and principles contained in these two Charters; to concentrate cooperation on respecting and strengthening fraternal historical ties and good-neighborly relations; to be committed to respecting the territorial integrity and regional safety and equality of principles making it inadmissible to aquire territory by force; noninterfrence in the domestic affairs of states, and a commitment to settling disputes by peaceful means. These states also endeavor to make the Middle East an area free from weapons of desruction, to realize this through international organizations, and to improve their economic performance in order to contribute to strengthening political stability and serving the interests of security and stability in the region.

The Cabinet expressed its deep satisfaction with the excellent results achieved during the meetings in Damascus and Riyadh. It considers them significant and a positive step on the path to deeply rooting the meaning of Arab solidarity and consolidating the ongoing efforts aimed at achieving the virtuous desired goals to serve the interests of the peoples of the Arab nation.

The Cabinet also hopes that these continuous and fruitful meetings will achieve the hopes and aspirations for a more stable, more secure, and safer future so that the Arab nation will be able to continue its march to further development, prosperity, and advancement on all levels. [passage omitted]

The Cabinet has expressed its concern and indignation at reports on the deteriorating situation in Iraq and the aggression, injustice, and tyranny inflicted on the Iraqi people by the ruler of Iraq, Saddam Husayn, in various Iraqi provinces and towns that are calling for a just, wise, and stable regime in Iraq.

The Cabinet reiterated the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's support for the sovereignty and unity of Iraq, the land and the people, and the Kingdom's absolute rejection of harming any part of Iraq in any way. [passage omitted]

Defense Minister on Gulf Security, U.S. Role

LD1203231891 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2115 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Dhahran, 12 Mar (SPA)—His Royal Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, second deputy prime minister, minister of defense and aviation, and inspector general, reaffirmed that the Armed Forces of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on the instructions of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques and supreme commander of the Armed Forces, are moving steadily to develop and expand so that they will be capable, God willing, to defend the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states.

His highness patronized a graduation ceremony of the 65th class of the Institute of Technical Studies in Dhahran today. At a new conference afterward he said: "The Arab Gulf states are progressing steadily toward developing their armed forces under the umbrella of the studied military strategy." [passage omitted]

His highness explained, in response to a question on the security strategy in the Arabian Gulf, that security in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in particular and the Gulf in general was stable and firmly established before the president of the Iraqi regime's invasion of Kuwait and remains so. He said: "The region will, God willing, be under the protection of the Islamic shari'ah and good work and under the umbrella of close cooperation among the believing Gulf people."

On the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's role in the security of the Arabian Gulf and whether the United States will be asked to play the same role it is playing now, his highness said: The Kingdom plays a vanguard role and I believe that the path it is following now, which is to develop our Armed Forces, will be adequate to provide security for the Kingdom and the Gulf countries in cooperation with the group of Gulf states. His highness added: That does not prevent us at all from cooperating under the umbrella of the Arab League Charter and the joint Arab defense agreement and cooperating with our brothers who participated with us in this sphere whenever the need arises.

Answering a question on the current cease-fire between the joint forces and the Iraqi aggressor, His Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz said: As you know, military operations have ceased completely according to the desire of the Security Council and the coalition states. However, an official cease-fire has to be endorsed by a Security Council resolution which is expected to be issued soon. His highness added: However, fighting has indeed stopped in all military positions. [passage omitted]

Answering a question on whether Iran constitutes a source of danger in the region after the defeat of Saddam Husayn, His excellency said: We do not think that Iran, a sisterly Muslim country, will be a source of danger to us. If the questioner has any doubts about that he should address the question to Iran directly.

On the effects of establishing Saudi-Soviet relations and the future relations between the Kingdom and the Soviet Union, his royal highness said: "I am sorry you asked me this question because the sovereignty of the Kingdom is

above all else. No one restricts the Kingdom in establishing its relations with any state in the world."

His royal highness added: "Therefore our relations with the Soviet Union or with any state can never affect our relations wtih another friendly state."

His Royal Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz thinks that modern wars rely more on advanced technology than on numbers. He pointed to the military operations to liberate the State of Kuwait and their results.

He said that military cooperation among the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] states is proceeding according to plans. He noted that the Desert Shield forces represent a part of that cooperation.

His royal highness said: "Cooperation in this sphere is developing and there is no objection to increase military cooperation among GCC states."

His Royal Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz stressed the need to destroy weapons of mass destruction in the area. When he was asked about Israel abandoning those weapons he said: "The important thing is the disarmament of harmful and internationally banned weapons anywhere, whether in Israel or anywhere else."

His royal highness stressed the need to solve the Palestinian issue in accordance with the international resolutions which have been adopted." He said: "It is important for the Palestinian issue to be resolved in accordance with United Nations and Security Council resolutions."

His highness said that there is a joint agreement between the Kingdom and the United States which stipulates that U.S. forces will return to their country after completing the task for which they have come. His highness said: "The United States is a friendly country. It responded to the call of duty and contributed effectively." He pointed out that in accordance with agreements between the custodian of the two holy mosques and President George Bush and the statements of the two sides, U.S. forces are on their way to their country. He said: "Our relations with the United States are good everywhere and at all times."

In concluding the conference, His Royal Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz thanked the local and international press. He stressed the need for the press to seek the truth and objectivity in the stories it carries.

Italy's De Michelis on Talks With Gulf Leaders

AU1103120791 Rome ANSA in English 1022 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Text] Kuwait City, 11 March (ANSA)—"Everyone—Arabs, Israelis and Americans—want to avoid a crisis like this one from being repeated. What is now needed is for a mechanism to be put into action and Italy has advanced its proposal: a Mediterranean Helsinki," Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis said here Sunday [10 March] following talks with Kuwaiti leaders.

Soon after his arrival, De Michelis met with the premier of Kuwait, Prince Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Sabah, to discuss the region's future security and reconstruction, as well as other problems in the Middle East.

On Saturday, de Michelis was in Riyadh where he was received by Saudi King Fahd to whom he delivered a personal message from Italian head of state Francesco Cossiga. The Italian diplomatic chief also took part in a working dinner, offered by Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, together with United States Secretary of State James Baker and the foreign minsters from Canada, Joe Clark, Syria, Faruq al-Shar' and Egypt, 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid.

Before arriving here, de Michelis went to al-Ta'if, in Saudi Arabia, for a meeting with the emir of Kuwait, Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah.

Speaking to the press on the recent series of talks he has had in Washington and then Damascus, Amman, Jerusalem and Tripoli (together with his partners in the European Community foreign ministerial Troika), de Michelis affirmed how the Arab position on the major Middle East question, the Palestinians, has basically not changed. King Fahd, he said, reiterated "with precision" that their position remains the full application of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 for the Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian territories and the holding of an international peace conference on the Middle East. The Saudi monarch, he added, also "explicitly criticized" Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) chairman Yasir 'Arafat for supporting Iraq during the Gulf crisis.

"I cannot say that I have found a shift" in the positions of the Arabs, de Michelis affirmed, "but there does appear to be a climate for change. No one, not even King Fahd, appeared to have a preconceived position on the Arab-Israeli question."

While Italy continues to support its proposal for a conference on security and cooperation in the Mediterranean (CSCM), which could be held under the aegis of the United Nations, "it is not an alternative to other initiatives," De Michelis underscored, adding how the proposals [word indistinct] (?states) will make following Baker's ongoing mission to the Gulf, Israel and the Soviet Union, will be of the utmost importance.

"A president of the United States does not express himself, as Bush did on the Palestinian question, unless he has a strong motivation to find a solution," de Michelis observed.

Sunday night, de Michelis returned to Riyadh for another meeting with the Saudi foreign minister and

today leaves for Beirut and then Damascus, before travelling to Cairo on Tuesday [12 March].

On the question of Italy's participation in the reconstruction of Kuwait, de Michelis underscored how "we are ready not only to participate in the reconstruction from a technical point of view, but also to offer financing means, the form and terms for which we must see."

While the United States and Britain are expected to pick up the lion's share of the estimated 50 billion dollars in reconstruction contracts, Italy, which also took part in the military action to drive out Iraq, is also likely to win some important contracts. Italian Foreign Trade Minister Renato Ruggiero, in fact, will visit the region this week and is expected in Kuwait on Tuesday or Wednesday.

Algerian Ambassador Denies Hajj Boycott This Year

LD1203203691 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Yesterday His Excellency 'Abd-al-Wahhab Ahmad 'Abd-al-Was'i, minister of hajj and awqaf, received Abdelkader Bensalah, Algerian ambassador to the Kingdom. The meeting was attended by 'Isam Khashuqji, under secretary at the Ministry of Hajj and Awqaf and director of the minister's office. During the meeting, a number of issues related to Algerian pilgrims were discussed.

After the meeting the Algerian ambassador told SPA that the consultations fell within the context of getting acquainted with preparations and arrangements the Kingdom has made for this year's pilgrimage season. He expressed his appreciation to the government of the custodian of the two holy mosques and its efforts to serve pilgrims headed for God's house. He praised the facilities the government of the custodian of the two holy mosques has prepared to receive this year's pilgrims.

The Algerian ambassador affirmed that media reports to the effect that Algeria would boycott this year's pilgrimage are false. He said: The Algerian Government is already making arrangements for Algerian pilgrims to perform their hajj rites. What is being repeated by voices here and there, he pointed out, only expresses the views of those speaking. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Official Praises Saudi Leadership

LD0903190491 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Text] A prominent Palestinian official said that the relationship between the Palestinian community in the Kingdom and the sons of the Saudi people, which has extended over some 40 years, is a brotherly and exemplary relation which is looked after and developed by a wise and conscious government in the Kingdom of South Araiba. The former PLO representative to the Kingdom, Mr. Sa'id Khalil Ibrahim al-Muzayin 'Abu Hisham, added that all the Saudi capabilities, moral, political, financial, and even military, reinforce and bolster the continuation of the Palestinian struggle.

He explained in a statement published today in AL-RIYADH that the Palestinian community in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has organized support through the popular committees for the support of the Palestinian struggle for over a quarter of a century. He pointed out that it is constantly increasing through the extreme care and serious follow-up of their royal highnesses the princes who supervise this operation, especially His Royal Highness Prince Nai'f Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the interior minister, and His Royal Highness Prince Salman Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, governor of the Riyadh region.

'Abu Hisham explained that the Palestinian people aborted the misleading media campaigns which some quarters tried to launch to sow the seeds of division between the sons of the Saudi and Palestinian peoples. He said that the Palestinian comunity is surrounded with the care of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, the custodian of the two holy mosques, and his brothers, government, and sons of his people. He went on to say: I address my congratulations to the sons of the Saudi and Kuwaiti peoples, in particular, and the sons of the Gulf and the Arab nation, in general, on this victory which has led to the triumph of right and the defeat of wrong. Sharing this message of congratulations with me are all the sons of the Palestinian people who consider the consolidated victory of Kuwait and its praiseworthy restoration a victory for the Palestinian cause.

He explained that this victory is a propitious sign which confirms that no matter how long the night is, dawn is bound to follow, that no matter how evil his acts, the unjust will always be defeated in the end, and that the state of injustice is transient while the state of justice is eternal.

He pointed out the PLO leadership did not assume the role it should have assumed, which is to stand on the side of Kuwait and by the Arab rank which rejected the occupation. He explained that the leadership of the organization harmed the march of Palestinian political action with a stand which was incongruous with its general line maintained since 1972.

UN Asked To 'Annul or Suspend' Economic Blockade

NC1303095791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0725 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 13 Mar (INA)—AL-'IRAQ has asked the United Nations to shoulder its responsibilities and annul or suspend the unjust resolutions which the UN Security Council had adopted against Iraq, particularly the economic blockade resolution.

In an editorial today, the newspaper said that there is no other explanation for the stalling and procrastination regarding this other than to punish the Iraqis and pursue them by depriving them of their subsistence and baby milk.

The paper said: Punishing the Iraqi people by leaving the unjust resolutions hanging over their head like the Sword of Damocles is neither civilized behavior nor is it in harmony with civilized logic. This behavior only reflects a deficiency in good values and normal human outlook to say the least.

The paper pointed out that lifting economic sanctions and the blockade imposed on Iraq not only redresses the injustice perpetrated against the Iraqi people by this blockade but also cleanses hearts of dark thoughts and evil intentions.

The paper explained that the economic blockade against Iraq in fact transcends the desire to confront the regime. It is a comprehensive punishment for the people and a means of harassing them in their daily lives. This provides ample evidence that it is more of a means to take revenge on the people rather than putting pressure on the regime. Therefore, it is indeed tantamount to an outrageous crime with the intention of starving and oppressing the people.

The paper emphasized that the United Nations must shoulder its responsibilities in this regard and that the Security Council, whose resolutions have all been accepted by Iraq, should take the appropriate measures to annul or suspend these unjust resolutions, particularly the economic blockade imposed on Iraq.

The paper said: The international community should bear the major responsibility for pressuring those who stand behind this unjust insistence on starving the Iraqi people. Some might have had an excuse [to support the resolutions] before Iraq accepted the international resolutions, but Iraq's acceptance will subject them to historical questioning and the human conscience will take them to account for it because their silence implies encouragement to commit crimes and to continue committing them. Therefore, the international organizations, led by the United Nations, and all world public opinion forces must voice their human and moral stands against the economic blockade.

The paper appealed to these forces and organizations to be on a level with their human and historical responsibilities. The paper said: We are not only expressing a desire to be free of the economic siege, but we also want the human society to free itself of the shackles of bondage that lie deep in their subconscience and which tie them to stands where all feelings of love and goodness disappear and where the society is devoid of the cherished values of human society.

Commentaries, Talks Discuss Regional Situation

West's 'Overnight' Concern Mocked

NC1203203291 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1153 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Ladies and gentlemen, in today's issue, an AL-THAWRAH article entitled "With Our People's Awareness and Will, We Have Foiled the Scheme of Aggression and Plotting" says:

Every noble Iraqi, even every honest Arab, now feels satisfied with, proud of, and contented with the heroic epics and the unique fighting feats of the glorious Iraqi sons in confronting the American-Atlantic-Zionist aggression, and in thwarting the vile imperialist scheming plot with all its tools and chapters. [passage omitted]

We know that the plot not only intended to destroy Iraq and halt its progress and renaissance, but also that it primarily aimed to destroy the Iraqi people's will and efficiency, undermine its understanding, and loosen the bonds of its unity and cohesiveness with its historic leadership and valiant Armed Forces. Despite all these constant facts, what has happened and what is happening clearly indicates that the 30 countries' aggression has failed to achieve any of its central objectives, and that the great Iraqi people are fully aware of the essence and extent of the hostile scheme. This people has emerged from the duel intact with its full will, efficiency, profound understanding, and its deep faith in the principles and aims of the national and pan-Arab July revolution. Despite the ferocious and intensive political and propaganda campaigns and the psychological war—still being waged by the losing aggressors against our people and nation—this war has not and will not weaken the determination of our conscientious, experienced, and courageous people. It will not be affected by it, and will not be deceived by any of its lies and deceptions. The hostile alliance thinks that this psychological war can penetrate the steel wall of our people's national unity, and can affect its feelings and stands. But this alliance is completely ignorant of the Iraqi people's true mettle, morale, and nature; and that their deep belief in principles and sanctities and legitimate national and pan-Arab rights protect them; and that firm self-confidence and confidence in the future fill their hearts.

These enemies have forgotten that the Iraqi people's understanding of and its experience with the hostile media organs are superior to all these organs' lies and

exposed deceptions and that these struggling people—armed with understanding, faith, and determination, who have continued to fight the aggressors and the ambitious throughout its history—are fully capable of distinguishing between the trenches and the mines. They can tell the difference between their honest patriotic sons, who embody their hopes and national and pan-Arab ambitions, and those cheap, trifling agents and spies who have sold themselves cheaply in the political cattle market and accepted for themselves the humiliation of treachery and agentry to the foreigner and service to his evil and hostile schemes and plots. [passage omitted]

After committing all their barbaric and ugly crimes against Iraq and its people, the aggressors are shedding crocodile tears, and are displaying—deceitfully and superficially—concern over Iraq, its people, and its future. How can the Iraqis believe these enemies? How can war criminals become concerned overnight about the people they have targeted, and whose life, possessions, and all monuments of its civilization and progress they have destroyed? Who will believe these racist killers? How can they think that their exposed lies and deceit will deceive the proud Iraqi people?

Our belief and confidence in our great people are limitless. Our confidence is not temporary or transient and is not caused only by feelings of affection and affiliation, but is a profound confidence enshrined and baptized by modern and ancient historic facts and events. These experiences have shown the true and noble mettle of the Iraqi people, and how firm and cohesive its will is in fighting aggression and defeating aggressors. They have shown that they are a proud people that refuses to submit and be subservient to the foreigner. Underneath all this, we know what mutual confidence and bonds of struggle bind this loyal people to its honest leadership and its valiant Armed Forces. We also know how determined the Iraqis are to strengthen steadfastness and continue the battle of construction and progress with the same determination and conviction with which they fought aggression and triumphed over it. Yes, we stood fast in the mother of battles and triumphed because of the Iraqi people's will, understanding, unique genius, and firm and tested national unity which has stood fast against the mightiest and most ferocious challenges. We also succeeded in destroying the scheme of aggression and plotting, and in thwarting all the bets, delusions, and sick dreams that nestled in the heads of the enemies of our people and nation. These enemies targeted not only the land, the people, and the buildings, but also our people's will and freedom, and aimed to tie its hands with the shackles of imperialism and Zionism, impose humiliation and slavery, and decide the fate of its sons. Greetings to our great people, to their struggler leader Saddam Husayn, and our valiant Armed Forces.

Baker's Tour, PLO Exclusion Noted

NC1303114591 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1013 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] Ladies and Gentlemen, recent developments that began to emerge [words indistinct] imperialism and Zionism [words indisitnct] major plot against the Arab nation. After the first (?step) aimed at destroying Iraq, the United States began the next step of the plot. This step can be summed up in a U.S.-Zionist [words indistinct] imperialist circles tried to exclude the PLO from the political efforts to resolve the Middle East crisis. At the same time, they declared their preparedness for discussions with other Palestinian parties to peddle their schemes and (?foil) the UN resolutions that called for recognizing the Palestinian people's right to their land and homes.

As is usual for puny traitors such as Fahd and Husni in obeying their masters, the ruler of Egypt and the traitor of the two holy mosques welcomed the U.S. steps. They have been even more enthusiastic than the Americans themselves in peddling the Zionist scheme in the region. However, despite their enthusiasm over and rush for the scheme, their Zionist and imperialist masters let them down even regarding the simplest demands of the so-called solutions to the Middle East crisis. Tel Aviv Zionists refused to meet with Syria's ruler and declared frankly that they will maintain the text of their expansionist [words indisitnct] of not exchanging land for peace. Moreover, Baker, who recently visited the Zionist entity, implemented the world Zionism's scheme excluding the PLO from the negotiating table to resolve the Middle East crisis. He tried to contact certain Palestinian parties and popular forces in the occupied Arab territories. However, he met with utter failure in the face of the insistance of our Palestinian Arab people in Palestine, who emphasized that the PLO is their sole legitimate representative. The position of the sons of the Palestinian Arab people in the face of the attempts by the United States and Zionist entity to peddle their plans is yet further proof that the Arabs refuse U.S. schemes, which they view as the other side of the bad Zionist political coin.

The Zionist officials' statements refusing to exchange land for peace is a clear message to the traitors and agents that they have to pursue the Zionist course to the end and not turn to the plans that America puts forward, because it is the Zionist entity that (?decides) and not the United States. Thus it has become clear to the whole world that the traitors and agents were nothing but trivial puppets not only in the hands of America, but also in the hands of the Mosad and the Zionist circles that move them. It has also become clear that their crime against Iraq will remain a badge of disgrace that will haunt them to doomsday, because they stayed with the Zionists even in the filthiest pages of the disgraceful, vile, and base plot. Nevertheless, the Arab people's

punishment will inevitably put things right in order that this nation may restore its rights and roles worthy of playing in the human community.

Leaders Jumping Into U.S. Lap

NC1203182491 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1635 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Talk from the "Voice of the Peninsula and the Arab Gulf" program]

[Text] Zionist Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir has invited the Syrian and Saudi regimes to start negotiations with the Zionist entity. The negotiations will revolve around relations among these parties in the light of their joint action under U.S. command in the aggressive alliance against Iraq and the Arab nation. Shamir's invitation did not come out of the blue but is an expression of a real understanding of the new developments and an attempt to exploit them in favor of the Zionist entity and its occupation of Arab lands. Shamir understands very well the Syrian and Saudi regimes' positions on the region's events and the future shape of these events. Shamir is fully convinced that Hafiz al-Asad has no intention of entering any form of conflict with the Zionist entity, especially after al-Asad opened his pocket to his new master George Bush and received his money and aid after offering allegiance and obedience and aimed Syrian Arab guns at the sons of Iraq and the Arab nation.

Shamir knows that al-Asad is an ally of Bush, and accordingly, an ally of the Zionist entity in light of Zionist-U.S. relations and the Zionist-U.S. strategic alliance agreement. Undoubtedly, Hafiz al-Asad has signaled his readiness to follow the course of subjugation and subservience to the United States and the Zionist enemy ever since he and Husni joined the imperialist-Zionist-Atlantic alliance against Iraq.

There is nothing to prevent al-Asad from reaching an understanding with the Zionist enemy, as long as Husni recognizes that entity and permits its flag to fly in Cairo. What Husni can do, al-Asad can do. Are they not a part of the same alliance? Each one carried out what was requested of him in the campaign against Iraq. Therefore, al-Asad has the right to imitate Husni and the others. He has the right to be a friend of the Zionists, so that the equation will be correct, and each one of them will stand in his normal position [words indistinct].

Following Hafiz al-Asad's eagerness to meet with terrorist Shamir, Fahd, the ruler of Najd and Hejaz [Saudi Arabia] and betrayer of the two holy mosques, has found his golden opportunity to jump completely into the lap of the United States and the Zionist entity, and to cease antagonizing Israel and defending Jerusalem and Palestine. Fahd knows full well that Shamir does not seek relations with the Saudi regime for the sake of these relations themselves. Shamir wants a price for this relationship. He only wants Saudi funds. He needs funds to settle hundreds of thousands of new Jewish immigrants and to strengthen his terrorist grip on the sons of Palestine. Fahd is ready to pay, just as he previously paid Israel by proxy through the United States.

Fahd does not care [words indistinct]. The subject of Jerusalem is no dearer to him than Mecca and Medina. This is just one facet of the big alliance for which he has long planned [words indistinct]

Hatred of West Discussed

AU1003183291 Frankfurt/Main FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE in German 8 Mar 91 p 3

["Ulf" report: "Hatred of Everything Western in Iraq"]

[Text] Damascus, 7 Mar—In the discussion about the postwar order in Iraq, the almost 20 opposition groups are increasingly calling for a right to a voice. "It is disgusting for me to think that the United States wants to create a new order in the Middle East and to force a new government on Iraq from outside." Mahdi al-Ubaidi [spelling as published], a leading member of the Iraqi opposition of the Ba'th Party in the Syrian capital Damascus, said this in an interview with FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE. In his view, the Iraqi Army and the Iraqi people hate "everything that is Western." The United States strengthened the anti-Western attitude by bombing water and electricity works, he stressed. "It is unworthy of an Iraqi to have to drink dirty water from puddles after the bombings," al-Ubaidi, whose groups wants to assume power in Baghdad, pointed out. Al-Ubaidi, who condemns the occupation of Kuwait by Saddam Husayn's troops, stressed that the Iraqi opposition in the Ba'th Party is not willing to pay for the consequences of the war and the damage caused by the war if it should assume power. "The world cannot expect us to carry a heavier burden than the one we are carrying because of the war," al-Ubaidi stated. Both the United States and the FRG Government have so far rejected offers for cooperation with the opposition in the Iraqi Ba'th Party. For this reason, these governments are "against the rights of the Iraqi people," al-Ubaidi pointed out. On behalf of his Iraqi opposition group, he rejected any help of foreign states that is linked to conditions.

Nation To Continue Challenging Imperialism

NC1303112691 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0715 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 13 Mar (INA)—AL-QADISIYAH emphasizes that Iraq shall remain the vanguard of the Arab struggle and it will not abandon its pan-Arab principles whatever the challenges.

In today's editorial, the paper says that Iraq will continue its policy of challenging world imperialism and the forces of neo-colonialism irrespective of the strength and might

of these treacherous forces. Iraq's building experiment shall remain a beacon for all the honest people in the world.

The paper indicates that Iraq has been subjected to the most serious conspiracy in its modern history. It says that this is an indubitable and indisputable fact that is clear to everybody, that has really taken place, and that has been realized by all—big and small. Therefore, the resistance against this utterly ugly, rancorous, and mean conspiracy assumes the character of challenge and confrontation. This is what great Iraq is now doing behind its leader Saddam Husayn.

The paper recalls that Iraq has emerged triumphant from the eight-year war; the political, economic, and scientific blockade; the foreign crises that have been fomented to tarnish its reputation, the obstacles and the difficulties that have been put before it; and the plots that have been concocted to destroy its economy and keep it in poverty and burdened with debts. The paper affirms that Iraq realizes that all this took place in preparation for this serious plot to destroy Iraq, tear apart its geographic map, and shatter its national unity.

AL-QADISIYAH says that when America, with the assistance of the Atlantic alliance states and the area's agents, launched its ugly aggression against Iraq, it was hoping to achieve these goals all at once, to control the region after Iraq—as a state, people, and Army—is finished, and then to dominate the Arab nation and its natural resources as well as its political decisionmaking and its people's will. Nevertheless, after Iraq's legendary steadfastness vis-a-vis this unprecedented formidable treacherous force ever mobilized, America has continued its ugly conspiracy in various other forms which British colonialism had practiced during the British occupation of Iraq.

AL-QADISIYAH adds: The military aggression failed to achieve its political goals. Likewise, the U.S. conspiracy failed to weaken Iraq and bring it to its knees. The great Iraqi people have launched, with a spirit of national defiance and resolve, a stage of construction and rebuilding of great Iraq following the destruction that was caused to its institutions and its service-related and scientific infrastructure. The Iraqis launched rapidly into this great national effort. The conspiracy has failed in all its stages. The Iraqis were not demoralized by the destruction that was caused to property and to infrastructure in their country. They started the reconstruction and rallied closer around their historic leadership. The Iraqis are writing a new page in their record that is so full with heroism and glory. They are asserting their noble origins, their civilized past, and their great faith in the lofty national, pan-Arab, and human principles.

The newspaper emphasizes that the great Iraqi people who are now faced with the task of rebuilding under circumstances that are undeniably harsh will not spare any effort and will indeed put in more work and additional time to make their country flourish even more than before and their army as strong as it always has been. Thus we will prove to the world, and particularly to the forces of unjust aggression, that their war and the immense monies that they spent—and that could have been better spent if given to the hungry people in the world—were in vain, that they have not gained anything from their venomous raid against the land of the Arabs, and that all their endeavors, in the past and the present, to reshape the region are threatened with obliteration by the Arab revival triggered by the steadfastness of great Iraq.

As for our valiant Armed Forces, they will forever remain the same national force that will not abandon their arms in confrontation with the enemies and will defend the peace, safety, and national unity of Iraq in the face of the covetous forces. There is no task more honorable than that of protecting great Iraq and safeguarding its sovereignty and national unity.

Nation's 'Standing' Remains Unchanged

NC1203092591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0820 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 12 Mar (INA)—AL-JUMHURIYAH has emphasized that the resolve and toughness of the people of Iraq is such that it is to be found only in great peoples.

The paper said in an editorial today: Iraq has passed the major test with its well-being, children, material resources, and natural wealth unscathed, after the imperialist-Zionist alliance's partners thought that their military buildup, funds, and rallying behind the United States would ensure the success of their despicable drive to destroy Iraq.

The paper added: The thrust and fury of the imperialist-Zionist attack was directed against Iraq's economic infrastructure, services, residential areas and bridges, and places of worship.

AL-JUMHURIYAH added: Iraq has dashed the hopes and sick dreams of this alliance of criminals, haters, and traitors and exposed them as being in conflict with all the values and moral and legal codes.

The paper ridiculed those who are contemplating a rearrangement of the regional situation, or creating what they call the new world order. They have to respect Iraq's abiding civilized role and must realize that Iraq's standing, in terms of history, geography, and civilization, has not changed and never will, the paper concluded.

Kurds Loyalty to Homeland Stressed

NC1203115091 Baghdad AL-'IRAQ in Arabic 9 Mar 91 p 1

[Editorial: "Partridges Do Not Forget Their Homeland"]

[Text] Kurdistan has remained the bright color in the Iraqi tent. Therefore, the Kurdish dagger remained to

the side of the Arab sword. Both are the Iraqi weapon against all the enemies of Iraq dreaming to control it.

The Iraqi Kurds, who see in the oak tree another face of the Iraqi palm tree, will always remain Iraq's soldiers because they believe that the beloved Iraqi homeland is the center of their security and source of dignity. Therefore, all calls on the Kurd to turn his eyes elsewhere in the hope that this would achieve his aims, will founder. In the same way, the evil poisons claiming that the foreign boat is the one which will achieve the Kurdish hopes will founder like rocks from the Kurdish mountains into the fathomless valleys.

The Kurd is a pure Iraqi. He is also gallant and noble. He who enjoys these refined characteristics is the son of the kind land and its courageous guardian. Therefore, the hateful spearheads that want Iraq to be its target are the futile and aimless ones.

For this reason, the mountain will only be Iraq's proud fortress in the north. The valleys of Kurdistan will only grow the good ears of corn for Iraq. Therefore, Iraq's fortress protected in this manner makes it difficult for the attackers to penetrate or break into.

Beloved Kurdistan is the cherished part of dear Iraq. The Kurds in it carry the Arab sword just as the Arabs in the south and the center carry the Kurdish dagger.

This spirituality is what Iraq needs at this stage in confronting challenges, because it is the stage that must witness the interaction of the spirit of citizenship and the entanglement of feelings to the extent that loyalty to Iraq becomes the standard of the genuine trend of all citizens and the basis of its legitimacy.

Iraq is a country that stressed that its inspiration stems from one source of blood. Therefore, the unity of the Iraqi people, as much as it is the means to bring about the happy Iraqi dream, is the road to the fatal nightmare for the enemies.

Therefore, the Kurdish voice in the mountains and valleys resonated in the marshlands and deserts in the same way the Arab voices were reflected on the rocks in beloved Kurdistan as an indication of the Iraqis nobility and sincere loyalty to the dear homeland.

Iraq's vivid tent regards the Kurdish color as increasing its beauty. The enemies of the Kurds and Iraqis, however, want the Kurdish color created by God to be different. This is impossible because God's will is above all wills. Therefore, the Kurd is committed to the homeland to the highest degree, because the Kurdish proverb says: Partridges do not forget their homeland.

Scholar Says New Government Needed

NC1303162991 Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 3 Mar 91 p 10

[Interview by TISHRIN with Muhammad Hadi al-Mudarrisi, scholar in the Islamic Action Organization in Iraq—date and place not given]

[Excerpts] [TISHRIN] What is your opinion of what is taking place in the Gulf?

[Al-Mudarrisi] What has been taking place in the Gulf in terms of a destructive war hurts every Arab and Muslim for two reasons:

First, it is a battle in the wrong place.

Second, it is an unbalanced battle.

Because it is in the wrong place, it sacrifices the nation's pan-Arab and crucial issues for no reason. Because it is unbalanced, it will perhaps end in a terrible catastrophe that will befall our dear homeland, Iraq. [passage omitted]

[TISHRIN] What is your opinion on the prospects for a solution?

[Al-Mudarrisi] We find no radical solution for the ongoing war or for the crisis Iraq has been suffering for the past 22 years, except in removing Saddam Husayn from power so that the Iraqis can choose the kind of leadership and president they find acceptable.

There can be no solution except the fall of the tyrant, because the tyrant distributes his internal crises to his people and then exports them to the neighboring countries. He is the source of problems and the head of sedition.

[TISHRIN] What is your opinion on the unity and sovereignty of Iraq?

[Al-Mudarrisi] Iraq's geography should not be harmed. We can never accept fragmenting Iraq. We stress its unity—land and people. It is true that there are many nationalities in Iraq and sectarian differences that must be respected through a multiparty system and opinion sharing. If we condemn the occupation of Kuwait, then we unreservedly condemn the occupation of Iraq, regardless of who occupies it. Because the Iraqis reject oppression and are brave men, then they will, no doubt, defend the sovereignty and unity of their homeland to the last man and the last drop of blood.

[TISHRIN] How do you see Iraq after Saddam?

[Al-Mudarrisi] The Iraqi opposition has a clear view of what will follow Saddam. This view has been declared in statements published earlier, especially the joint statement that was signed by the Iraqi opposition parties in Damascus two months ago.

We believe in the need for a new Constitution in Iraq that is accepted by the Iraqi people. It should include freedom of expression and freedom to form parties. It should also adopt the multiparty system and sharing opinions as a basis for the rule. The Iraqis do not need guardianship by anyone; nor do they need a tyrant who thinks and makes decisions on their behalf. They need freedom of choice.

Saddam is the idol who forced the people to worship him instead of God in Iraq. If this idol is removed, then by virtue of their mental capabilities, scientists, parties, organizations, and the Iraqis will be able to run their own affairs as well as anyone.

[TISHRIN] Do Saddam's slogans tally with his efforts to drag the Arab nation into war with Israel?

[Al-Mudarrisi] The Palestine question, no doubt, is in the heart of the Islamic nation's issues in particular. Liberating Palestine, no doubt, is the objective of every Arab. But how, when, where, on whose hands?

However, we do not believe that Saddam is the right person for this issue. Not only because he is incapable of that, but also because he is not sincere on this issue.

If Saddam were sincere about liberating Palestine, he would not have occupied Kuwait; rather, he would have directed Iraq's immense capabilities toward Palestine. Then, the foreign forces would not have been able to interfere against Iraq, and every Arab would have had no choice but to side with Iraq. Raising the slogan of liberating Palestine and then occupying an Arab state—saying this is for that—is nothing but nonsense. [passage omitted]

Calls To Continue 'Uprising' Reported

New Radio Carries Messages

NC1303063391 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0330 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Excerpts] The cities and other areas of Iraq continue to be scenes of clashes between the Muslim Iraqi people with forces still faithful to Saddam. [passage omitted]

An IRNA report states that a radio calling itself Voice of Revolutionary Iraq started broadcasting yesterday afternoon and carried repeated messages calling on the people to continue the uprising until the removal of the Ba'thist regime.

Opposition Leader Urges Mobilizing

NC1003183091 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1650 GMT 10 Mar 91

[Text] Damascus, 10 Mar (SANA)—Ayatollah Muhammad Taqiy al-Mudarrisi, an Iraqi opposition leader, has called on the Iraqi Army to abandon the ruling regime and join the ranks of the rebelling popular forces.

In an interview today, al-Mudarrisi said: What are the honorable members of the Iraqi Armed Forces waiting for before joining the ranks of the popular forces? How can the Iraqi Army tolerate these catastrophes which the Iraqi regime has brought on it and the Iraqi people by forcing them into another losing war? He stressed the need for the Iraqi Army to seize the decisive opportunity now to put an end forever to the present ruling regime.

He also called on Muslim scholars and religious authorities to act and issue a fatwa for jihad against the Iraqi regime until it is brought down. He said: The Iraqis inside and outside the country must mobilize themselves and their resources to deal a crushing blow to this regime.

Concluding, the Iraqi opposition leader said that the head of the Iraqi regime has no choice today but to submit to the Iraqi people's demand, which is to immediately relinquish power.

Opposition: Foreigners Not Interfering in Uprising

LD1003190691 Tehran IRNA in English 1709 GMT 10 Mar 91

[Text] Bakhtaran, Mar. 10, IRNA—Spokesman for the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq (SAIRI) Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Mahmud Hashemi today rejected allegations that foreign countries were interfering in the popular struggle sweeping across Iraq. "Airing such reports is a plot by arrogance in its bid to distort the people's uprising. As a matter of fact, Iraqi people by forging complete unity are carrying on their struggle without any foreign assistance," Hashemi said. He condemned Western propaganda efforts aimed at creating anarchy inside Iraq in case the present government falls, and said "such propaganda will have no impact on the course of the struggle of the people and the combatant groups." Hashemi claimed that more than 50 Iraqi colonels along with 5,000 soldiers under their command, have joined opposition forces in the al-Basrah and al-'Amarah regions. He refused to disclose the names for security reasons. "Large amounts of heavy weaponry including tanks and helicopters have fallen into the hands of the popular forces," Hashemi said. "The Baghdad government has also cut the food rations of the people, giving them to the Iraqi security forces instead," he added.

Heavy Fighting in Major Cities Continues

'Violent Confrontations' in Baghdad

NC1303085791 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0830 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] The Iraqi people's uprising against the ruling regime has swiftly spread to the Iraqi capital itself, where violent confrontations are raging to control the city. While cities in northern and southern Iraq continue to fall to the opponents, the latest reports from Baghdad say that the cities of al-Shu'lah and al-Thawrah which are

close to Baghdad have completely slipped out of government hands and fallen to the revolutionaries. The reports say that clashes are continuing in Baghdad and violent battles are raging in the southern suburbs of Baghdad.

Pro-Saddam Forces Shell Al-Basrah

LD1303084291 Tehran IRNA in English 0820 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Khorramshahr, Kuzestan prov., March 13, IRNA—Several explosions were heard here from inside the Iraqi southern port city of al-Basrah Tuesday night. Al-Basrah, the second major Iraqi city, is reportedly under control of the opposition forces in the wake of the popular uprising in Iraq which broke out after the end of the devastating Persian Gulf war.

The explosions were heard at 15:45, 16:00 and 17:00 GMT which rocked buildings in this port city neighbouring al-Basrah. The explosions were reportedly caused by the artillery attacks and shelling of the city and its surrounding areas by the forces loyal to the Iraqi president.

1,000 Soldiers Said To Surrender to Kurdish Rebels

LD1203182191 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1740 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, March 12 (TANJUG)—Around 1,000 fully armed Iraqi soldiers today surrendered to the Kurd rebels near the Turkish border in northern Iraq a well-informed Iraqi opposition source told TANJUG's correspondent here today. According to the latest official opposition report, the rebels in Iraqi Kurdistan have occupied the towns of Hajj 'Umran and Halifan, north of Karkuk, as well as the town of Kifri. [words indistinct] in the occupied towns has already been taken over by the "Revolutionary Committees," the report said.

Saudi Statement on Iraqi POW's 'Completely False'

NC1203181591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1715 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] [no dateline as received] An official Foreign Ministry spokesman made the following statement to INA:

Yesterday, 11 March, AGENCE-FRANCE PRESS [AFP] carried a misleading statement by an official Saudi military source in Riyadh. The agency cited the source, which it named as Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Rashid, as saying that Iraq refused to receive about 500 Iraqi prisoners of war [POW's] who were scheduled to be repatriated to Iraq on that day.

This statement is completely false. It was agreed that three batches of Iraqi POW's, each comprising 500 persons, were to be handed over before 21 March, with the first on 11 March. After officials from the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC] inspected the region on the Iraqi-Saudi border where the transfer was to take place, they found mines planted during the military operations. The ICRC headquarters in Geneva therefore had to be informed that the transfer scheduled for 11 March would be delayed until after the competent Iraqi authorities had removed the mines and the transfer process set to be completed by 21 March was rescheduled. The ICRC informed the Saudi authorities and announced through its official spokesman in Geneva that the delay was due to the presence of mines, as reported by AFP.

The Iraqi authorities have begun removing the mines as quickly as possible in order to secure the region where the transfer will take place.

By his lies, the Saudi official intended to mislead public opinion regarding Iraq's full commitment to the POW exchange agreement reached at the Riyadh meeting on 7 March 1991, and Iraq's commencement of implementing the agreement under the auspices of the ICRC team in Baghdad.

Pro-Regime Forces Said Using Chemical Weapons

NC0903194191 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1730 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Text] Damascus, 9 Mar (SANA)—Ayatollah Muhammad al-Mudarrisi, spokesman for Iraq's Islamic Action Organization, has called for an emergency session of the UN Security Council to look into the Iraqi regime's attempts to liquidate the defenseless Iraqi people and destroy what remains of the country's capabilities and institutions.

A memorandum sent by al-Mudarrisi to the UN secretary general and the UN Security Council members said: Because of the gravity of the situation in Iraq and in the name of the Iraqi people who are on the receiving end of killing and devastation by the head of the Iraqi regime, I am calling for convening an emergency session of the Security Council so that it can pass a resolution to keep the Iraqi regime from pursuing its genocide of the Iraqi people, who are demanding the departure of the head of this regime and an end to his dictatorship.

Reminding the international community of the Iraqi regime's practices in Kuwait during its occupation of that country, al-Mudarrisi presented these atrocities as an example of what it is doing now and what it has done on a larger scale in Iraq for the past 22 years.

He emphasized the Iraqi people's determination to topple the present regime which has obstructed Iraq's civilized role.

Engineer Bayan Jabr, director of the Damascus branch of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, announced earlier that the pro-Iraqi regime's forces used chemical weapons against the population of al-Najaf and al-Kafal [placename as received], inflicting many casualties.

He said in a statement today that the Iraqi regime's forces were thwarted in their attempts to seize al-Hillah

and al-'Amarah byforces of the popular uprising, who forced them to flee leaving behind heavy and light weapons.

He announced that the 7th Border Brigade under Major General Khalid 'Abid Ibrahim had joined the uprising forces, as had the intelligence battalion of the 7th Corps and some missile battery commanders in al-Basrah.

Ayatollah al-Mudarrisi said earlier today that forces of the popular uprising had taken over the al-Basrah broadcasting station and were now operating it after completing the necessary repairs.

Al-Khalisah, which lies near al-Kut, is now completely under the control of the people, and several units of the Republican Guard sent to supress the public have joined the popular forces.

He disclosed that 10,000 soldiers of the Republican Guard have joined the ranks of the popular forces in al-Najaf, and pointed out that al-Sulaymaniyah and al-Qarraniyah in northern Iraq have fallen to the popular forces.

'Nationalist Stand' of Khanaqin Citizens Praised

NC1203184991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1730 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Ba'qubah, 12 Mar (INA)—'Izzat Ibrahim, deputy chairman of the Revolution Command Council [RCC], conveyed the greetings of President Saddam Husayn, may God keep him, to the masses of citizens of Khanaqin city, which he visited this morning. Ibrahim said great Iraq will keep its head held high and proud with its sons' hands and sacrifices, and with the wisdom of their knight leader struggler Saddam Husayn. He added that the threads of the oppressive and evil conspiracy which the Zionist and imperialist circles hatched against our steadfast and mujahid country have been torn and shredded by the will of the masses in Iraq, and that the scum has gone and what is beneficial to people has remained in the land, God willing.

The RCC deputy chairman asserted that great Iraq will blaze its difficult trail with the firmness and resolve which the enemy knows before the friend, and that the march led by leader and knight Saddam Husayn will not be stopped by misfortune; neither will its resolve be weakened by troubles.

He praised the genuine nationalist stand of the residents of the Diyala Governorate in general, and the residents of Khanaqin city in particular.

Ibrahim visited Diyala Governorate and discussed with its Governor Khadr 'Abd-al-'Aziz ways of making the agricultural campaign a success, the status of services in the governorate, and the functions of the service departments.

Ibrahim called for rendering the best services to the public and for implementing the directives of leader President Saddam Husayn in this respect.

Participating in the meeting and the visit were Mizban Khadr Hadi, member of the party's Regional Command; the comrade secretary of the Diyala branch command of the party; and several officials in the administration authorities.

Meanwhile, 'Izzat Ibrahim met with officials of the services departments in Khanaqin, and issued directives to provide necessary services for the governorate residents.

Kurdish Group Statement on Autonomy Anniversary

NC1103102091 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0825 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Text] Baghadad, 11 Mar (INA)—The Kurdistan Revolutionary Party [KRP] has reiterated its absolute readiness to place all its capabilities and those of its strugglers and masses at the disposal of President Saddam Husayn in the epic of building a new Iraq.

In a statement issued on the 17th anniversary of the adoption of 1974 law granting autonomous rule to Iraq's Kurdistan, the KRP said that the battle of the new national construction which awaits us is one of the most decisive battles of modern history, not because of the vast scope of the destruction inflicted on great Iraq by the despicable killers, but because of the tremendous dangers represented by the imperialist-Zionist-reactionary challenges.

The KRP expresses confidence that the great Iraqi people, who have been known throughout history for their ancient cultural heritage and their generous sacrifices, are capable of coping with the glorious battle for cultural construction and of proving to the world at large that they are worthy inheritors of their bright past and will wage the struggle that will give them a present and a future full of tremendous achievements.

In its statement, the KRP points to the great accomplishments scored by the glorious 17-30 July revolution for the benefit of our Kurdish people. It says that in this regard the government's funds allocated to development projects in the autonomous Kurdistan region between 1987 and 1990 totaled 1.666 billion dinars.

In its statement, the party underlines the honorable role played by the Kurdish masses when they volunteered to bear arms in the battle of steadfastness against the U.S.-Zionist-Atlantic aggression and to be in the vanguard in defending cherished Iraq, the Iraq of the Arabs, Kurds, and lofty national unity. The KRP reiterates that it has played a leading role in mobilizing the masses to confront the treacherous aggression and in marshalling all resources in the trench of defending great Iraq.

Talks With UN Delegation on Medical Needs Start

NC1103095991 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0900 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Text] The first round of talks between an Iraqi delegation led by Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf, minister of state for foreign affairs, and the UN mission led by (Ihtisabi), envoy of the UN secretary general, was held in Baghdad yesterday. The two sides discussed Iraq's needs in terms of medicine and other medical equipment.

In a statement published in the newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH today, al-Sahhaf said that the mission consists of representatives from the United Nations and its specialized agencies and [word indistinct] with the authorization of the UN secretary general. The mission is tasked with holding talks with the Iraqi side and defining Iraq's immediate needs.

Continuing Reconstruction Efforts Noted

Restoring Electrical Power

NC1203132891 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1215 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 12 Mar (INA)—Baghdad Governorate's General Electricity Department is continuing to provide electricity to a number of residential quarters in Baghdad City, the department's director general has told INA.

He said electricity has been provided to several residential quarters in Baghdad. They are Saddam City, al-Sha'b, 7 Nisan, al-Baladiyat, al-Za'faraniyah area, Hay al-Mu'allimin, Makabb Sarah, al-Riyas, 'Arasat al-Hindiyah in al-Masbah, the areas of al-A'dhamiyah and al-Waziriyah, parts of al-Dawrah city, Hay al-'Amil, al-Bayya', Abu Gharib, al-Khadraj, al-Matta, al-Mansur, and Hay al-Salam, and parts of al-Kadhimiyah and al-Shu'lah cities and Hay al-Mustansiriyah.

He said the department's work teams are operating with all their capabilities day and night to provide electricity to other quarters of Baghdad. He noted that teams are repairing the electricity networks that had come under brutal bombardment by the United States of America and its allies. The department's cadres are now (?repairing) power generating stations and installing generators in order to secure larger energy sources and cover greater residential areas.

Repairing Bridges, Irrigation

NC1203123591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1115 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 12 Mar (INA)—The Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation has drawn up a work plan to operate the canals and repair the dams which were damaged by the savage bombardment of great Iraq by the United States, its allies, and collaborators.

Announcing this to the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY, Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation 'Abd-al-Wahhab Mahmud al-Sabbagh said that the treacherous aggression was aimed against the huge irrigation projects such as irrigation systems and civilian bridges. He added that most dams were damaged as a result of the savage bombardment of Iraq's economic installations, particularly the operation sluices [Bawwabat al-Tashghil] and power stations which produce power for irrigating huge agricultural areas.

The minister added that the aggression was also aimed against the main canals, including the dams of al-Kut, al-Ramadi, and Samarra' as well as the (al-Mishkhab) canal and a number of outlets. The aggression, the minister said, had further damaged bridges on these canals despite their civilian nature [word indistinct] installations.

The minister of agriculture and irrigation said that the ministry has formed committees in the governorates to distribute fuel to the irrigated areas in accordance with struggler President Saddam Husayn's instructions which provide for distributing fuel among peasants and farmers, the owners of electrical pumps to guarantee a successful agricultural plan.

The minister noted that the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation will adopt the necessary measures to launch a comprehensive harvest campaign throughout the country and prepare the prerequisites of the agricultural campaign such as reserve equipment and fuel.

Minister 'Abd-al-Wahhab Mahmud al-Sabbagh pledged to the leader of our victorious march, President Saddam Husayn, on behalf of all the workers in the agricultural sector to double their efforts and utilize all available potential to increase production and rob the enemies of the chance to [word indistinct] great Iraq.

Peres Meets Baker, Comments on Peace Talks

TA1203173491 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1700 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Report by Dov Gilhar]

[Text] Shim'on Peres ended his meeting with Secretary of State Baker about 15 minutes ago. Yitzhaq Rabin arrived 15 minutes early and therefore, had to wait for Mr. Peres to end his meeting. It seems that unity, at least over meetings with Baker, does not exist in the Labor Party. In the meeting with Shim'on Peres, Baker asked Peres to analyze various situations. He asked for Peres' opinion on various possibilities. Peres said that in his view there are two options, a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, or a Palestinian delegation. The two discussed how to solve the problem of Palestinian representation and who would be a participant if it were set up.

[Begin Peres recording] If a Palestinian delegation can be put together then I would also support it. If it cannot be set up then the best alternative—I believe it is the best alternative—is a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. We are neither discussing theories nor a theoretical situation. There is a map, there is Jordan, there are the Palestinians. The differences between us and the Likud are not over whether there will be a representative from Jerusalem or a Palestinian who resides or works in Jerusalem in the delegation. The differences are very deep and should not be glossed over. [end recording]

The U.S. delegation wanted to hear Peres' opinion on the issue of a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. They did not talk about their preferred solution. Several issues were discussed. After the meeting, Peres could not say what James Baker was striving for, or what appeared to him to be the most practical solution. The meeting with Rabin continues.

Shamir, Arens Brief Ministers on Baker's Visit

TA1303122091 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] During his stay in Israel, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker did not present any proposals whatsoever on a political solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Our political correspondent Arye Golan reports that this is what Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir told members of the Ministerial Committee on National Security Affairs this morning.

At the end of the meeting, Mr. Shamir and Defense Minister Moshe Arens gave the ministers a brief report on the talks with the U.S. secretary of state, saying they had merely consisted of exchanges of views on various issues, ranging from the lessons of the Gulf war to the political solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The ministers were told that the talks had not culminated in any agreements, that no negotiations had been held, and that Israel's leaders had stated their adherence to the government's peace initiative of May 1989.

More on Baker-Shamir Meeting

TA1303123691 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 13 Mar 91 pp 1, 6

[Report by diplomatic correspondent David Makovsky]

[Excerpts] Israel should make some concrete gestures to improve the Palestinians' situation in the territories, if it seeks reciprocal confidence-building measures from Arab states, a senior State Department official said following yesterday's meetings between Secretary of State James Baker and Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir.

Among those steps, he said, are the following: opening universities, easing curfew restrictions, lifting limitations on travel, and in general improving the economic climate in the territories.

Sources say that the Prime Minister's Office prepared a position paper for Shamir's private working dinner with Baker at the premier's home with spouses, outlining gestures that Israel could make in this direction. There is some speculation that during their session last night, Baker may have informed the tight-lipped Shamir about what gestures Arab states would make in return for every Israeli move, a cycle which could serve to widen trust for a two-track policy: negotiation between Israel and Arab states, and Israel and the Palestinians. [passage omitted]

Only few other specifics are known about the Shamir-Baker meetings, as last night's two-and-a-half hour working dinner and much of yesterday morning's one-and-three-quarters hour discussions were held without aides or notetakers.

However, a senior U.S. official said Baker asked Shamir about reports that Israel had intended to build 10,000 new housing units in the territories. Shamir said that no final decision has been made.

[Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew on 13 March, in a report by 'Aqiva Eldar, Yizhar Be'er, Or Nir, and Eytan Rabin on pages A1 and 8 says "Shamir replied that the government abides by its commitment and is not directing new immigrants there."]

[Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew on 13 March, in a page A4 by Avino'am Bar-Yosef report, adds that in his meeting with Baker yesterday, Defense Minister "Arens mentioned, at his own initiative, the intention of resuming studies in the universities, a process that started even before the Gulf crisis. He emphasized the fear that this move may rekindle the violence and increase terrorism. He also noted the importance of holding elections in the territories as part of the Israeli peace initiative."]

Reportage on Palestinian Meeting With Baker

Fatah Threatens Delegation

TA1203090091 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0830 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Threats have been voiced in the territories against the leaders who will meet with James Baker this afternoon. A Fatah leaflet distributed in Judaea and Samaria today strongly attacks the United States and the personalities who are expected to meet with the U.S. secretary of state. The leaflet says all the plans the United States has presented are in fact a plot to turn the Arab region into one controlled by the United States. Our correspondent in the territories Udi Segal points out that the leaflet calls these Palestinian people a poor substitute and a miserable alternative to the PLO and notes that their end will be death.

Graffiti painted in Ramallah and signed by the strike forces condemn Faysal al-Husayni and Hanna Sinyurah, who were termed a disgrace to the Palestinian people.

Delegation Submits 11-Point Document

TA1203150191 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1430 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Report by Yaron Kulas and territories correspondent Udi Segal]

[Text][Kulas] The meeting between U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and the delegation of Palestinian notables from the territories began precisely one hour ago. Two notables announced this morning that they would not participate in the delegation. [Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1400 GMT on 12 March states that "the representatives of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and of the PLO's communist faction have stayed away from the meeting with Baker. The 10 Palestinians who did come include Faysal al-Husayni, Ilyas Frayj, Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, and Zuhayra Kamal."] The conversation is under way, while a Kakh demonstration is being held outside.

Our correspondent Udi Segal reports that the notables gave Secretary of State Baker a joint paper:

[Segal] Ten out of the 12 Palestinians who met with the troika ministers are now meeting with James Baker. The delegation handed Baker an 11-point document. The first point states that the PLO is the sole representative for the territories Palestinians. Further, they adhere to the initiative of the 19th Palestinian National Council of November 1988, which resolved to establish a Palestinian state alongside of Israel. The Palestinians accept all UN resolutions pertaining to Palestine and call for their immediate implementation. They urge the prevention of the annexation of East Jerusalem; the establishment of settlements; and the violation of the 4th Geneva Convention. In addition, they demand that an international conference be held, where a practical outcome is achieved, and condemn Israel's ironfisted policy and violation of human rights in the territories.

Palestinians 'Happy' After Meeting

TA1203155591 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Report by Yaron Kulas outside the U.S. Consulate in West Jerusalem where Secretary Baker's meeting with a delegation of Palestinians "just ended"]

[Excerpts] Ten out of the 12 Palestinian leaders who conferred with the European troika foreign ministers several days ago arrived for today's meeting with James Baker. The Palestinians presented their position on negotiations over the peace process in the region.

[Begin Faysal al-Husayni recording, in English] We talked about the importance of doing something to stop the settlements in the occupied territories and then we went to the main issue, that there must be a rebuilding of the relations between the PLO and the United States. For sure, we didn't reach a full understanding, but we are happy that we heard from Mr. Baker that the dialogue between the PLO and the United States is suspended and not terminated. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Sa'ib 'Urayqat stressed that the meeting took place after official permission was received from the PLO leadership in Tunis.

[Begin 'Urayqat recording, in English] The group of Palestinians that came here today came at the direct order of the PLO. [end recording]

'Urayqat said the meeting would not have taken place without the letter that arrived through a third party which instructed them to meet with the secretary of state. Baker himself did not say anything when he left the meeting, but one of the Palestinian leaders said that Baker said in answer to their demands that all efforts were being made to start a peace process in the region.

Delegate Say Baker 'Serious'

TA1203174791 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1705 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Report by Gil Litman]

[Excerpts][Litman][passage omitted] Hanan 'Ashrawi, a Bi'r Zayt lecturer and one of the participants in the meeting with Baker, was asked for her interpretation of the absence of the two communist representatives. She replied that they have announced that while they support the meeting, they feel a conference with Americans so soon after the Gulf war would be premature. This is how Hanan 'Ashrawi summed up her impressions of Baker's approach to the peace process and of the meeting itself:

[Begin 'Ashrawi recording, in English] We got the impression that Secretary Baker and the administration are serious about pursuing this, that they have the

serious intent. At the same time, they did not spell out any specific or concrete steps. They wanted to explore possibilities. They saw new attitudes, especially on the part of the Arab countries they visited, particularly Saudi Arabia and Egypt. They saw some encouraging signs from Israel. But to us, this is not....[end recording]

[Litman interrupts, translates, and continues] But to us, Palestinians, it is not enough. [passage omitted]

Clause 6 of the 11-point document submitted by the Palestinians speaks of the annulment of Israeli sovereignty over what they term occupied Palestine. When I asked 'Ashrawi what this term means, she replied:

[Begin 'Ashrawi recording, in English] We use the term occupied Palestine very clearly to refer to the territories mentioned as a result of [Resolution] 242 mentioned in the PNC [Palestine National Council] resolutions and in the declaration of statehood by the PNC. We mean not all of historic Palestine; no, we didn't mean all of historic Palestine. Occupied Palestine now is a term referred to the declaration of independence to the occupied territories. [sentence as heard] [end recording] [passage omitted]

Communist Explains Absence

TA1203160591 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1525 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Report by Arye Gus]

[Excerpt][passage omitted] One of the two Palestinian notables who surprisingly failed to show up for the meeting with Baker is Dr. Ghassan al-Khatib, lecturer at Bi'r Zayt University. I have just received his press communique, in which he states that the U.S. importance in the peace process should not be exaggerated and that the Palestinians must rely on the international community; that the U.S. President's statements contain nothing new; and that the territory-for-peace principle had been presented in the past. The communique further says: I was mentioned as one of the participants for this meeting, but after the recent statements rejecting the PLO and every kind of cooperation with it, I decided that this is not the appropriate time for such a dialogue.

It must not be forgotten that the Palestinian Communist Party is one of the important components of both the PLO and the Palestinian national leadership in the territories. It should be noted that another notable, who is close to communist circles—Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi from Gaza—did show up for the meeting. Perhaps the reasons for this can be found in local circumstances. It is known that the Arab community in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza has been seriously opposed to the very idea of meeting with Baker and to the beginning of a dialogue with the United States, particularly in view of the latter's part in the Gulf war. [passage omitted]

Paper Reports 11-Point 'Manifesto'

TA1303101391 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 13 Mar 91 pp 1, 2

[Report by Hemi Shalev, Mikhal Sela', Yoram Levi, and Amir Neumann]

[Excerpt][Passage omitted] In the course of their meeting with Secretary Baker yesterday, the Palestinians presented him with an 11-clause manifesto, in which they stressed the need to apply the UN resolutions without selectivity.

These are the main points:

—The PLO is the legitimate representative of the Palestinians. The Palestinian people alone have the right to elect their leaders and will not tolerate any attempt to intervene in this vital issue.

—We reaffirm our commitment to the Palestinian peace initiative as formulated by the Palestine National Council in November 1988. Our goal is to set up a Palestinian state alongside Israel within the framework of a solution involving two states.

—We support all the UN resolutions referring to the issue of Palestine and call for their immediate and full implementation.

—The Palestinians' national rights, primarily the right to self-determination, liberty, and statehood, should be recognized.

—Israel should not be allowed to continue to block and foil the UN resolutions on the Palestinians, particularly with regard to the annexation of East Jerusalem, the establishment of settlements, and the expropriation of land and resources. It is vital that the fourth Geneva Convention be applied.

—It is necessary to immediately terminate the de facto Israeli sovereignty over occupied Palestine. Instead, a network of protection for the Palestinians and assurances for Israel should devised within the framework of a UN mandate, using the Security Council's authority to enforce.

—The peace process should be advanced.

—An international conference will be the most effective mechanism to promote the peace process.

—Israel's policy in the territories must not be allowed to continue to sabotage the peace process, says the manifesto with respect to Israel's firm policy against the Palestinians, and the geopolitical and social facts it establishes in those areas should likewise not be allowed to foil that process.

—Security in the region will be assured by international guarantees.

—Stability in the region will be attained through cooperation and mutual recognition and with reference to economic development potential. [passage omitted]

More on Meeting With Baker

TA1303110191 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 13 Mar 91 pp 1, 6

[Report by Jon Immanuel]

[Excerpts] U.S. Secretary of State James Baker told a delegation of 10 Palestinians yesterday that the U.S. did not rule out future contacts with the PLO, but said peace should come through dialog between Palestinians and Israelis, coordinated by the U.S., according to Palestinians who attended the meeting. [passage omitted]

The group tried to justify 'Arafat's position in the Gulf war by saying Palestinians were like drowning people who grasped at the outstretched hand of Iraq, one delegate said. [passage omitted]

The delegation told Baker he should know that they were meeting him at the instruction of the PLO leadership. Baker said he understood that and considered it an internal matter, according to Zuhayra Kamal, a women's rights activist.

Hanan 'Ashrawi, a university professor, said she left the meeting with the impression that the U.S. would explore ways to resume the dialog with the PLO. [passage omitted]

Cracks in the Palestinian center appeared yesterday morning when two members of the group of 12 who met with three European foreign ministers last week, and were therefore authorized by the PLO to meet with Baker, refused to join the delegation.

Engineer Riyad al-Maliki, associated with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP], said at a press conference yesterday morning that he opposed "deliberate and continuous U.S. omission of the PLO's role in any future compromise." [Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew on 13 March, in a report by 'Aqiva Eldar, Yizhar Be'er, Ori Nir, and Eytan Rabin on pages A1 and 8, adds: "'This is not the right time for such a meeting, both because of the U.S. role in the Gulf and because the Palestinians would not gain anything. The U.S. position remains unchanged and Baker only came to Israel to adopt additional Israeli ideas,' Dr. Riyad al-Maliki claimed. To boot, he said, The Americans have extended aid to Israel to the tune of $650 million. Asked whether the lives of the people who met with Baker were in danger, he replied in the negative. 'This is part of the democractic nature of the PLO,' he said.] PFLP anti-American slogans appeared on walls in Gaza and one by Al-Husayni's house near the Mount of Olives, said "No to the Baker conspiracy."

[The HA'ARETZ item add, "There were many opponents of the meeting also in the Arab street, and dozens of graffiti slogans were painted in various places in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. One, scrawled on walls in Nabulus and Ramallah, said: 'Al-Husayni and Sinyurah, you are the mark of Cain and the shame of the Palestinian people.' A clear warning, in the name of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, was scribbled in the French Hill quarter of Jerusalem: 'Those who shake Baker's hand, which is awash with Arab blood, beware!' Al-Husayni's house in East Jerusalem was also smothered with disparaging slogans.

["In addition to the graffiti, two other leaflets strongly attacking the decision on the meeting were distributed in the territories yesterday. One, signed by Fatah, accused 'the U.S. imperialists of trying to pass conspiratorial plans which will turn the Arab region into a U.S. ocean and will disrupt the intifadah.' The personalities who consented to meet with Baker were termed in that leaflet 'poor substitutes and pathetic alternatives for the PLO, whose fate will be death early on.' Arab sources claimed yesterday that the leaflet was dictated by Fatah activists in Tunis who object to contacts with the United States. A leaflet signed by the Hawatimah splinter of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine also called for a boycott of the meeting with Baker."]

Bi'r Zayt professor Ghassan al-Khatib, considered a Communist Party supporter, also failed to turn up, despite his own published call in the East Jerusalem daily AL-QUDS last week for new thinking by Palestinians after the Gulf War. He told THE JERUSALEM POST "I had reservations about the American position concerning self-determination and the PLO and I wanted to make my reservations clear, but I was not against the meeting taking place."

A third absence noted by many was that of Hanna Sinyurah, editor of the East Jerusalem daily AL-FAJR. He told THE POST that he was absent because of a technicality, as he had been out of the country when the meeting with the European ministers took place last week. However, he said the Baker meeting itself was more significant than what was discussed or who participated. "It created the momentum towards progress in a peaceful, political process," he said.

Other members of the group included Bethlehem mayor Ilyas Frayj, former Hebron mayor Mustafa al-Natshah, political scientist Sa'ib 'Urayqat, Halil Mahshi, a Ramallah school principal, Furayh Abu-Maydan, head of the Gaza bar, Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, a Gaza physician, and Nabulus economist Mahir-al-Masri. Both sides described the meeting, which ran 20 minutes over the allotted one hour, as open and frank.

[Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew on 13 March, in a report by Tzvi Gilat, AFP from Tunis, and ITIM, adds that "a senior Palestinian source in the West Bank, who sought to remain unnamed, reported that before the meeting with Baker, several leaders from the territories presented the PLO with an ultimatum, saying that if it refused to permit them to meet with the U.S. secretary of state officially and publicly, they will meet him without a PLO consent.

["The source claims that this explains the confused PLO response and the unusual way the meeting was approved. The approval was given via WAFA, but no name of the

PLO official authorizing the meeting was appended. This, said the source, exemplifies the fundamental differences of opinion not only in the PLO but also among the local leadership in the territories."]

Pazner Rejects PLO 'Devices'

TA1303113591 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] In reaction to the report of the Abu-Sharif proposal, the prime minister's media adviser, Avi Pazner, said Israel has no interest in what the PLO is saying or doing. He repeated Israel's rejection of talks with the PLO, adding that Abu-Sharif's reported comments are an attempt to obscure the PLO's support for Iraq in the Gulf war. It's like a child who misbehaves and is saying: Sorry, now I'll be good, Pazner said. They have been discredited, ostracized, and are now trying all kinds of devices to make a comeback.

Baker Meets Victims Group, Leaves for Syria

TA1303091691 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0900 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Representatives of the victims of the Scud attacks have transmitted a message to Secretary Baker, in which they say that the missile victims are proof of the danger involved in arrangements according to the principle of territory for peace. The message was delivered to Baker via the U.S. Embassy in Israel.

Our correspondent Mira Amsalem reports that the representatives of the victims wished to meet with Baker or with John Kelly, but their request was turned down.

Secretary Baker wound up his visit to Israel this morning and took off for Syria. Our correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that no speeches were delivered at Ben-Gurion Airport. During his visit in Damascus, Baker will also confer with his Lebanese counterpart. One of the issues in their conversation will be the whereabouts of the hostages held in that country.

Official Bound for Moscow With Levi Message

TA1203200091 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] The USSR is trying to become involved in the peace initiative. Our monitor Mikha'el Gurdus reports that the Soviet ambassador in Cairo transmitted a message from Gorbachev to Mubarak saying that the USSR will support either of the three alternatives to promote the peace process: an international conference, a regional conference, or direct talks between Israel and the Palestinians.

Foreign Ministry Director General Re'uven Merhav leaves for Moscow tomorrow to exchange views with top Soviet diplomats in the wake of James Baker's visit to the region. Merhav is carrying a message from David Levi to Bessmertnykh, our political correspondent reports.

To Visit PRC After USSR

TA1303071191 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 13 Mar 91 p 1

[Report by political correspondent Hemi Shalev]

[Text] A breakthrough in Israeli-Chinese relations is expected when Foreign Ministry Director General Re'uven Merhav visits Beijing next week. During his stay in the PRC capital, Merhav is scheduled to meet with high-ranking officials, including the Chinese foreign minister, with whom he will discuss expanding bilateral political, cultural, and economic relations.

On his way to the PRC, Merhav will also visit Moscow, where he will hold meetings with Soviet officials. It was learned last night that Merhav is bearing a message from Foreign Minister Levi to his counterpart, Aleksandr Bessmertnykh. Jerusalem sources said that the USSR may renew its diplomatic relations with Israel as part of the U.S. intention to include it, at least formally, in the Middle East peace process.

Comments on Baker; USSR, PRC Trips

TA1303(0291 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Telephone interview with Foreign Ministry Director General Re'uven Merhav by Gay Zohar and Ya'el Dan—live]

[Text][Zohar] We catch you with one foot on the plane.

[Merhav] Not really, I am flying this afternoon. You caught me on my way to the office.

[Zohar] We will not keep you long. First of all, we would like to hear Israel's conclusions about James Baker's visit. We hear talk about optimism. Could you point to any specifics causing this optimism?

[Merhav] There are no final conclusions, just interim ones. The initial conclusion is that the visit was very successful and that it had been prepared very thoroughly. Secretary Baker saw Israel's vital problems, with his own eyes, from the bird's eye point of view. I think he will now be a different secretary of state, in the sense that what we had been telling him for so many years is now clearer to him.

[Dan] Beyond noticing the problems we have always claimed existed, does Baker have any reason to believe that Israel has in any way changed its position?

[Merhav] In this sense there has been no change. The basic difficulty lay in the fact that although they understood it, the Americans could not bring enough pressure to bear on the regional component, which is the most decisive factor in our geopolitical problems. In the wake

of the Gulf crisis and the normalization of the situation in Kuwait and all this involved, a clear chance has emerged for making regional progress.

[Dan] This sounds odd, you know. You would think from your answer that we were the ones who succeeded in influencing Baker and showing him things, whereas his talk about optimism may be based on new things he heard during his stay here. We do not quite understand the source of and basis for this optimism.

[Merhav] The source of the optimism is a combination of the things Baker brought with him. He heard new, albeit very cautious, tunes in the Arab countries and he understands that progress must be made in parallel.

[Dan] Did he hear new tunes in Israel as well?

[Merhav] We have never said that we do not want to make peace with the Arab countries. We have always argued that if we could put the pressure of the Arab countries aside and be left with our local problem, which is a very acute one, chances would increase of attaining an understanding. However, that is impossible when we face a constant threat, which has recently been demonstrated in all its gravity.

[Zohar] Would we be right in saying that Baker's visit does not look much into the future but is meant to be a first stage, to create the climate of talks without even mentioning the final solution which would ultimately have to come?

[Merhav] I would call it cautious progress toward the possibility of laying the foundations for an arrangement.

[Zohar] As Israel sees it, part of this progress may be a U.S. demand for explicit and avowed acceptance of Resolution 242 according to the U.S. interpretation?

[Merhav] Maybe, or maybe not. First of all, such acceptance exists and has been declared on many occasions. It is one of the cornerstones of the Camp David accords. I am sure that the secretary of state and the U.S. Administration now understand that if until now they had exerted enormous pressure concerning one clause in our peace initiative, progress must now be made in parallel—I am being very cautious with my words—and they realize that an opening for making proper progress has emerged for the first time.

[Dan] Could you confirm to us or do you know anything about a new PLO plan which includes some concessions, including giving up the demand to be a partner with equal rights in the negotiations?

[Merhav] The PLO's voice has hardly been heard recently. We follow it closely. I do not think the PLO is in a position in which it can be a partner at all. This has been proved recently, more than ever before. As for the plan, I heard about it on the radio a few minutes ago for the first time.

[Zohar] How would you react to such a concession, that the PLO no longer demands being a partner with equal right in the negotiations? Can you tell us whether this is a genuine concession or a cosmetic one?

[Merhav] You cannot give up something you do not possess in the first place. We have never recognized the PLO as a partner. I think the last few months have proved that our approach was right. Why should we carry the banner of the PLO at a time when the Arab countries disregard it, are furious with it, and have not even begun to settle scores with it?

[Dan] What are the chances that, in the wake of your visit to the Soviet Union, we may hear about the possible establishment of diplomatic relations?

[Merhav] I do not know; this depends first and foremost on the Soviets. Still, things look good today. First, we can easily fly to the Soviet Union; second, we can talk with very distinguished government officials and hold a dialogue about the Middle East issue, whereas in the past the only dialogue the Soviets conducted with us was through denunciations in the United Nations and arms supplies to our enemies.

[Zohar] Is the timing of your visit in any way related to the end of Baker's visit and the talk about a regional conference under the auspices of the superpowers or the five permanent members of the UN Security Council?

[Merhav] No. The timetable of meetings is so strenuous that you can always find a relation to some development. Still, the European troika was here; a new set-up has emerged in the Middle East; there has been a reshuffle in the Soviet Foreign Ministry; Foreign Ministry Levi and his counterparts, both Shevardnadze and Bessmertnykh, have agreed to hold frequent meetings. My visit is part of all these developments.

[Dan] Can your trip to the PRC also be seen as a political breakthrough?

[Merhav] I read the papers just as you do. My predecessor was also reported to have visited the PRC. Although we truly want to enhance our relations with the PRC, I am not prepared to comment on press reports.

Arens: No Palestinian State Within Present Border

PM1203141791 London BBC Television Network in English 2230 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Interview with Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens by correspondent Francine Stock in Israel on 8 March; from the "Newsnight" program—recorded]

[Text] [Arens] First of all, you have to start with the fact that Israel's a very small country with or without the territories, and secondly, that, especially under the present circumstances, when there was a possibility of the Iraqi Army entering Jordan and facing Israel on the Jordan River, we certainly would not have welcomed a situation where if the territories had not been under

Israeli control the Iraqi Army had entered the territories, which then would have been a possibility, and we would have found the Iraqis on the borders of Tel Aviv.

[Stock] Is it out of the question that the Golan Heights could form part of a negotiations in a peace deal with Syria?

[Arens] Well, our position is that we are ready to enter negotiations leading towards a peace treaty with all Arab countries, including Syria, without preconditions. This is why we don't set any preconditions—and I don't think it makes much sense, prior to the Syrians having even indicated their readiness to start negotiations with us, to say what our conditions would be or what our positions would be.

[Stock] Getting that the Americans have made it very explicit, particularly in the last few days, that they are looking for some movement on the whole Arab-Israeli relationship, will Israel not come under tremendous pressure to make some some concessions on either the West Bank or the Golan Heights?

[Arens] The pressure for movement towards a peace treaty or arrangements with the surrounding Arab countries is one that exists in Israel far more, or to a far larger extent, than any pressure that anyone can put on us, because we pay the highest price of all for the absence of peace in the area, and these are the lives of our sons. You just visit Israel's military cemeteries and you'll see the price that we have paid and that we don't want to continue to pay, because we have a peace initiative that was formulated by the Israeli Government in May of 1989. I think it is the best vehicle, in my opinion really the only vehicle, to move things forward.

[Stock] As Palestinians find the terms of the May 1989 initiative unacceptable, is a solution really possible? Haven't you now reached deadlock on the West Bank?

[Arens] Well, I don't really know that they find that these points are unacceptable. Some of these points are not even relevant to them. When we call on the surrounding Arab states that insist that they're in a state of war with Israel—whether it's Syria or Saudi Arabia or Jordan—to come to the peace table with us, I don't see that it is the business of any self-appointed Palestinian leaders to say that they reject that point. This is the point that needs to be addressed by the Syrian Government, by the Jordanian Government, by the Saudi Government, and I hope that it will be addressed. I don't see that any self-appointed Palestinian leader has a right to reject that point, and so on down the line. The point in the peace treaty—the fourth point in the peace initiative—the fourth point, calls—that is relevant to the Palestinian population—calls for elections amongst the Palestinian population in the territories so they can elect their delegates with whom we will negotiate. I don't really know that that has been rejected. I know that Mr. 'Arafat rejects it because he doesn't want elections, he has anointed himself the leader of the Palestinians and he doesn't want anybody to take his place. I'm not sure that the Palestinian population in the area actually objects to that, I think they would welcome the idea of holding elections.

[Stock] Do you think there will ever be a Palestinian state within the present bounderies of the State of Israel?

[Arens] I don't think so. There is a Palestinian state today, east of the Jordan River. Jordan is a Palestinian state in everything but name. It is three-quarters of the original Palestine mandate which Britain had after World War I. The population of Jordan is Palestinian. What we are talking about in terms of a Palestinian state is whether there should be a second Palestinian state or what the borders of the Palestinian state that lies east of the Jordan should be. Now, the West Bank used to be part of Jordan and the Palestinian population in the West Bank, to this day, are citizens of Jordan. So, if you ask me will there be another Palestinian state set up in the West Bank, I don't think so.

Paper Questions Reliance on U.S. Commitments

TA1203094891 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 12 Mar 91 p 4

[Editorial: "Territories Versus Guarantees"]

[Text] Except for a few die-hard ostriches, virtually all Israelis shiver at the thought of what would have happened had Israel heeded its own "peace camp" and the U.S. administration, and had traded territories for peace. Both Jordan and the new Palestinian state would have joined Saddam Husayn, and the relatively innocuous danger of Scuds from 700 kilometers away would have been replaced by a life-threat from the mountains of Judaea and Samaria, 13 km. from Tel Aviv. Obviously, Israeli withdrawal and "peace" with Palestinians ruled by the PLO and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] would not have provided the touted "best security" for Israel.

Not that anyone in Israel relishes ruling over 1.5 million Arabs. The government's view is that withdrawal would be suicidal, that even a continued intifada is a small price to pay for security. Another view is that the risk entailed in giving up the territories can be minimized by entering a defense arrangement or some other form of guarantees with the U.S.

This latter view coincides rather nicely with the thinking of the Bush administration, intent on having a permanent military presence in the area and establishing a pax-Americana in collaboration with its Coalition partners. These partners have now assured the administration that, once Israel settles the "Palestinian problem," that is, withdraws to the pre-June 1967 lines, they would make peace, and that American guarantees should then allay Israel's fears for its security.

Why successive U.S. administrations have believed that peace can be achieved not through changes in Arab dictatorships but by reducing the only democratic and

unshakable ally in the region to a burdensome protectorate, is an enigma Israel can do little about. But Israeli advocates of "guarantees" must realize that, while there is no reason to doubt American good intentions, it would be reckless to dismiss the effect of changes in circumstances, policies and personalities on relations between the two countries. Experience shows that Israel's "occupation" of the "territories" has nothing to do with such changes, and that the U.S. is no less prone than any other country to giving its interests precedence over its signed commitments.

Now that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] is equipped with American weapons systems and Israel receives billions in American aid, it is difficult to recall that an American arms embargo almost doomed the State at its inception, and that an American promise to supply Israel with arms was broken in 1955 in response to a retaliatory Israeli raid against terrorist marauders. And those who believe the Likud governments have brought U.S.-Israel relations to a "new low" may want to recall that the 1956 Sinai campaign brought not only the suspension by the Eisenhower administration of all talks of economic aid, but also a U.S. threat to support UN sanctions, including the expulsion of Israel from the world organization. The U.S. also threatened to block all United Jewish Appeal contributions and to tolerate a Soviet assault on Israel without intervening.

When Israel then gave up all the territories taken in the Sinai campaign, the U.S. agreed to guarantee that Egypt would not return to the Gaza district; it soon reneged on this commitment. Before the Six Day War of 1967, the U.S. "could not find" President Eisenhower's written commitment to Ben-Gurion to secure free navigation in the Tiran straits. It was Egypt's blockade of the straits that precipitated that war. After the war, though Israel's victory was, throughout the world, one of the most popular events since World War II and caused sympathy for Israel to rise to unprecedented heights, the Johnson administration suspended all arms shipments to this country, including spare parts, in violation of signed contracts. This was not done as punishment, but in the hope that it would induce the Soviets to slow arms deliveries to Syria and Egypt. When Israel hesitated to sign an interim agreement with Egypt in 1975, the U.S. announced a "reassessment" of relations and suspended all arms deliveries. Similar sanctions were imposed after Israel bombed Iraq's Osirak nuclear reactor. And, despite a 1975 American commitment not to initiate Israel-related political moves without consulting this country, both the Carter and the Bush administrations have done so.

All these difficulties are dwarfed by America's steadfast friendship for Israel, its military and economic assistance and often unique political support. But it would be an insult to both common sense and the integrity of the U.S. government to suggest that its support for Israel is a form of charity. The U.S. is the most generous country in history, and its humanitarian aid to needy countries is unmatched. But no government can consistently spend its taxpayers' money on charity. It must justify aid—whether a Marshall Plan for post-war Europe or the cancellation of Egyptian debts—in terms of American national interests. And only as long as this national interest is served, will support for Israel continue.

To assume that it will always be in America's national interest to sacrifice blood and treasure to defend a small, oil-less and strategically crippled Israel is foolhardy. It is even more doubtful that future circumstances will allow the U.S. to do so. As Golda Meir once said in response to an offer of guarantees: "By the time you get here, we won't be here."

Spokesman Denies Report on Clash With Israel

NC1103115191 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1100 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Text] Jordan's official spokesman has denied a REUTER report today which attributed details about the clash, which Israeli radio said took place between an armed group and Israeli troops this morning, to a high-ranking Jordanian official who was not named.

The official spokesman asserted that the Jordanian Armed Forces are now examining reports about this incident. The Armed Forces also are searching the area where Israeli radio said the clash occurred. The Jordanian Armed Forces have not yet reached any final conclusions.

The official spokesman expressed surprise that a report that contained a statement attributed to a Jordanian source had been disseminated without authorization from the concerned authoritative official sources.

Foreign Minister Receives PLO's Qaddumi 9 Mar

NC0903194791 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri received Faruq Qaddumi, director of the PLO's Political Department, in his office this evening. During the meeting, they reviewed the latest developments in the region, Jordan's political moves, and the results of the recent visits to Amman by the European Troika delegation and the Canadian foreign secretary. Qaddumi arrived in Amman from Baghdad earlier today.

PLO's Mahmud 'Abbas Arrives for Talks

NC1203145691 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 12 Mar 91 p 18

[Text] Amman—Mahmud 'Abbas [Abu-Mazin], PLO Executive Committee member, arrived in Amman last night to hold talks with officials. Palestinian sources have told AL-DUSTUR that several meetings will be held between the Jordanian and Palestinian sides during the visit to coordinate joint steps to confront the coming stage in light of the Gulf crisis events and international efforts to resolve the Palestine question and the Middle East crisis.

It is noteworthy that Jordan and the PLO agree on the need to hold an international peace conference and end the Israeli occupation of the occupied Arab land.

Received by Prime Minister

NC1303000191 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Prime Minister Mudar Badran received in his office tonight Mahmud 'Abbas, PLO Executive Committee member; Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, head of the PLO's Information Department; and Hakam Bal'awi, member of Fatah Central Committee. Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri was also present.

Discussions dealt with the latest developments in the region, the efforts being made to bring about a peaceful settlement in the Middle East, and ways to increase coordination and cooperation between Jordan and PLO to achieve a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the region based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and to safeguard the Palestinian people's legitimate rights.

The meeting was also attended by Palestinian Ambassador in Amman al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim.

UK Minister Hogg Leaves for Damascus 12 Mar

NC1203161191 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1515 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Amman, 12 Mar (PETRA)—Douglas Hogg, British minister of state for foreign affairs, left Jordan for Damascus via the al-Ramtha border point today, concluding an official visit to Jordan in which he conveyed to His Majesty King Husayn a message from the British prime minister and met several Jordanian officials.

He was seen off at al-Ramtha border point by a number of Foreign Ministry officials and the British ambassador in Amman.

Food, Medical Supplies Sent to Iraq 11 March

NC1203112891 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1055 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Amman, 12 Mar (PETRA)—A consignment of food and medical supplies organized by the Islamic Centers for the Support of the People of Iraq and the International Islamic Organization for Medical Relief left Amman for Baghdad yesterday.

Parliamentary Deputy 'Ali al-Hawamidah, member of the Islamic Organization, said the convoy comprises two large and eight medium-size trucks.

A number of doctors, pharmacists, and techincians went along with the convoy.

PLO's Rapid Support for Bush Plan Condemned

NC1203173191 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 12 Mar 91 p 16

["Issue and Opinion" by Salamah 'Ukur: "I Wished"]

[Text] I wish that the PLO had waited a while before declaring its support for Bush's plan, and before searching for a role in the imagined coming settlement.

I wish the PLO had waited a while to view the reaction to Bush's plan of the rest of the parties concerned with the Arab-Zionist conflict to determine how sincere the U.S.

Administration is and how capable it is of implementing this plan, which is categorically rejected by Israel.

I wish the PLO had waited a while to see the role it will be allowed to play and to know the Palestinian figures who will negotiate with Baker or others on its behalf and in its name. Moreover, it should have waited a while to become fully aware of the extent of the disagreement between the positions of Washington and Tel Aviv, and the possibility of bringing these positions closer or closing the gap between them.

The PLO should have waited to see whether or not Bush's initiative is, in the final analysis, a political maneuver.

If the PLO had involved itself in assessing Bush's plan and praising its positive points, thus preceding the reactions of Palestinians who are nominated to serve as its alternative in the new U.S. settlement, then it would have deprived itself of being the difficult factor that cannot be overlooked, just as it had wanted to be.

It was clear to us that the PLO leadership was standing in the Iraqi trench against the U.S.-Zionist-Atlantic aggression, and in support of the Arab pan-Arab awakening project led by Iraq and the Iraqi linkage of all regional issues. Furthermore, the PLO leadership believes in the futility of the dialogue with Washington as long as it continues to reject pressuring Israel and forcing it to accept the implementation of international legitimacy.

It is clear to all that the Bush administration has the power to impose its initiatives and plans on its allies inside and outside of the region, without facing any effective pressure by any of those allies.

The Bush administration can set the scenario of its plan in a full, amended, or incomplete form, or in a manner that pleases Israel. Then it either imposes it on its allies or completely abandons it, as it deems appropriate.

PLO sources say that the Palestinian delegation to meet with Baker in the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem today is its delegation, while Baker strongly denies this and regards it an alternative to the PLO.

At any rate, I wish the PLO had not rushed to declare its position on Bush's plan until after the Bush administration realizes the importance of this position and the dire need for it and loudly declares the PLO's important and principal role in the settlement; in other words, when Washington recognizes that the PLO is a difficult factor that cannot be sidestepped, especially since the brave intifadah in the occupied land is an extremely strong card in the PLO's hand, whether a settlement is reached or not.

Moreover, Iraq, the al-Husayn missiles, and its great and effective role in the region will be on the side of the PLO—especially because the day is not far off when Iraq will regain its full health and impose itself as the strongest and largest regional power.

By then, the Bush plan, which is now being rejected by Israel, will be something the Tel Aviv rulers will want the to PLO accept, because the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, which has no alternatives or figure to negotiate on its behalf.

Japanese Social Democratic Party Delegation Visits

Refugee Aid Discussed

NC1103120691 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1100 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Text] The Foreign Ministry secretary general, who is also the chairman of the committee charged with caring for refugees, met today with a delegation from the Social Democratic Party of Japan.

They discussed the cooperation between the committee and the Japanese Government to help the refugees arriving from Iraq and Kuwait. They also discussed the possibility of increasing the aid provided by the Japanese Government to help defray the expenses incurred by the Jordanian Government when it carried out its humanitarian duty in receiving, sheltering, and transporting the refugees.

The delegation thanked the Jordanian Government for its humanitarian efforts during the Gulf crisis.

Received by Crown Prince

NC1103201091 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Text] This morning, His Highness Crown Prince Hasan received at his office a delegation of the Social Democratic Party of Japan, which is visiting Jordan as part of a tour of a number of countries in the region.

His highness explained Jordan's stand on the Gulf crisis, which is based on principles of justice, rejection of violence, and establishing a constructive solution for peace which would avoid more catastrophes and setbacks in our region and take into consideration the major aspects of the problem.

His highness clarified the economic and social burdens Jordan has shouldered throughout the crisis and their effects. He also reviewed Jordan's stand regarding the Middle East crisis and the Arab-Israeli conflict. He affirmed Jordan's commitment to realizing the principle of Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab lands within the framework of the United Nations resolutions regarding this issue and the guaranteed implementation of the Palestinian Arab people's legitimate rights.

Iraqi Embassy Denies Taha Yasin Ramadan Killed

NC1203091791 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0855 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] An official source at the Iraqi Embassy in Lebanon, in a contact with our radio, has totally denied the news reported by the French Television Station TSN that Taha Yasin Ramadan was killed in an attempt to assassinate Iraqi President Saddam Husayn.

Two Rockets Said Fired at Israeli Security Zone

NC1103152191 Paris AFP in English 1434 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Text] Tyre, Lebanon, March 11 (AFP)—Two Katyusha rockets were fired Monday at an Israeli army post in Israel's "security zone" in south Lebanon, without causing any casualties, security sources in the region said.

The Soviet-made rockets exploded in Saff al-Hawa, in the central sector of the buffer zone controlled by Israeli troops and allied Lebanese militiamen, the sources said.

No group claimed responsibility for the latest Katyusha attack. Lebanese troops, deployed in the south of the country on February 7, have twice disarmed rockets aimed at Israeli targets.

Israeli helicopters fired hundreds of flares along the length of the Israeli-Lebanese border and over Palestinian refugee camps in the nearby Tyre region overnight Sunday.

Security sources said the Israeli army feared a possible guerrilla operation into northern Israel.

Six Arabs were killed Monday after infiltrating Israel from Jordan and three Israeli soldiers wounded in a shoot-out, the Israeli army said. The raid came hours before the arrival in Israel of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

Lebanese Prime Minister 'Umar Karami, quoted in an interview published Monday, said Israel was ready to withdraw from south Lebanon if the Beirut government managed to strengthen its presence in the region.

SLA-Fundamentalists Clashes Reported 11 Mar

NC1103152391 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1445 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Text] Clashes between fundamentalist organizations and the South Lebanese Army [SLA] are raging along the Lib'a, Kafr Falus, and 'Ayn al-Mir lines east of Sidon.

Army Takes Control of Beirut Area Ports

NC1103154791 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Statement by Defense Minister Michel al-Murr on 11 March; place not given—read by announcer]

[Text] To complete the imposition of the state's authority on the greater Beirut area, Army units today entered the ports of al-Dubayyah, Golden Beach, Jamil al-Jumayyil, Beirut Port's Fifth Basin, al-Awza'i, and Khaldah. These ports are now under the state's authority.

The Army units were entrusted with maintaining security inside the ports and supporting the concerned department in applying laws and curbing violations.

Instructions were given to the Army command to begin operating the maritime navigation room immediately. As a result, a working meeting was held at the Beirut naval base to organize navigation off the Lebanese coast as of 15 March 1991.

Army Commander General Emile Lahud inspected Beirut Port's Fifth Basin and supervised the deployment.

Syrian Army Confiscates Weapons, Drugs

NC0703105591 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] During the past two days, the Syrian Arab Forces have conducted raids on a large scale, involving many villages in the Ba'labakk and al-Hirmil areas. The raids targeted the drug-processing centers, and the Syrian forces confiscated large quantities estimated at dozens of tons of hashish, opium, and heroin. The Syrian forces also confiscated the processing equipment and other relevant material.

The campaign involved the villages of Dayr al-Ahmar, 'Aynata, Nibha, al-Labwah, Rasm al-Hadath, al-'Ayn, Fisan, al-Qasr, al-Mansurah, and al-Hirmil quarters. In addition, the Syrian forces impounded several types of medium- and light-caliber weapons. They transported the confiscated articles on civilian and military trucks to Ba'labakk and from there to 'Anjar.

Lebanese Forces Source Welcomes U.S. Position

NC1103080791 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Text] A Lebanese Forces source has expressed satisfaction with the U.S. position because foreign balance will facilitate the achievement of domestic balance and ensure that the al-Ta'if accord is more evenly balanced. He noted the following positive elements in the U.S. President's position:

1. President Bush did not link the Lebanese problem to Resolution 425; this indicates that the Lebanese problem is not confined to this resolution and that there are other problems in Lebanon besides the implementation of this resolution.
2. President Bush referred to the withdrawal of foreign forces from Lebanon.
3. The U.S. position emphasized the al-Ta'if accord and the United States replaced [tahawwul] the tripartite Arab committee which had been entrusted with addressing the Lebanese issue.

Reportage on UK State Minister Hogg's Visit

Stresses Wish for 'Good Relations'

NC1203170191 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1651 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Douglas Hogg, British minister of state for foreign affairs, and the accompanying delegation arrived in Damascus this evening.

In a statement to correspondents on arrival, Hogg said that the purpose of this visit is to stress that Britain wishes to establish good relations with Syria and also to hold talks on several of the region's issues, including the Palestinian problem. Hogg welcomed the restoration and development of diplomatic relations between Syria and Britian.

Hogg arrived in Dar'a Governorate from Amman. He was received at the Syrian-Jordanian border by Dar'a Governor Husayn Hassun, the assistant to the head of the Foreign Ministry's protocol department, and a number of the governorate's officials.

Discusses Ties, Hostages' Release

NC1203180091 Paris AFP in English 1715 GMT 12 Feb 91

[Text] Damascus, March 12 (AFP)—The improvement of relations between London and Tehran depends on the release of British hostages held in Lebanon by pro-Iranian groups, British Foreign Office Minister Douglas Hogg said here Tuesday.

Mr. Hogg, who travelled to Damascus by land from Amman, said Syrian officials had "impressed upon the Iranians how important it is that the hostages should be released, and that our relations with Iran cannot be improved until they are released."

Iran and Britain on September 27 resumed formal diplomatic ties which were broken off in early 1989 after the late Iranian spiritual guide, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni, called for the death of British author Salman Rushdie.

Mr. Rushdie's novel "The Satanic Verses" had been deemed blasphemous to Islam. Iranian authorities have so far refused to lift the death decree despite the resumption in relations.

In Lebanon the British hostages held are the Archbishop of Canterbury's special envoy Terry Waite, a captive for more than four years, television correspondent John McCarthy, seized in 1986, and former airline pilot Jack Mann, held since 1989.

"The Syrians have been very helpful in the matter of the hostages," Mr. Hogg told Agence France-Presse.

He was paying the first visit to Syria by a senior British official since February 1986, when London severed ties with Damascus following a dispute on terrorism.

Diplomatic relations were restored last November and British Ambassador Andrew Fleming Green presented his letter of credentials to Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' two weeks ago.

"I'm not trying to suggest for one moment that the Syrians control the hostages. That I know not to be the case," he said of Syria's role in Lebanon.

"We're asking the Iranians to use their humanitarian efforts to procure a release and I shall raise this again because, of course, the Syrians have contacts with the Iranians," he said.

Asked if he was optimistic about the release of the three Britons, Mr. Hogg replied: "I wouldn't say that. We shall go on working at it."

The release of Irish hostage Brian Keenan in August [1990] raised hopes in London that the remaining British prisoners would soon be let go.

Mr. Keenan provided the first concrete proof that Mr. Waite was still alive, saying he had heard the special envoy in a cell next to his own.

Mr. Hogg meanwhile is to hold talks in the Syrian capital with Mr. al-Shar' and is expected to meet President Hafiz al-Asad.

"We've got to emphasise that we want to establish a good working relationship with the Syrian government, to talk about people's attitudes towards the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian question, and to talk, too, about security for the Gulf states," he added.

The British official is also expected to meet with Jalal Talabani, leader of the anti-Baghdad Patriotic Union of Kurdistan.

Meets With Khaddam

NC1203220491 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1830 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Damascus, 12 Mar (MENA)—Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received Douglas Hogg, British minister of state for foreign affairs, and his delegation at 1730 today. Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs, and Muhammad Khadr, head of the Foreign Ministry's West Europe department, also attended the meeting.

Discussion focused on the situation in the region, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the importance of achieving a comprehensive peace on the basis of the UN resolutions and within the framework of an international conference. The talks also dealt with the situation in the Gulf and bilateral relations.

Saudi Envoy Conveys King's Message to Al-Asad

NC1103202691 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1915 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received Saudi Ambassador to Washington Prince Bandar Bin-Sultan at 1500 today. The meeting was attended by foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

During the meeting, Prince Bandar conveyed a message to President al-Asad from King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz of Saudi Arabia.

Developments in the region and the Gulf area and contacts being held at both the Arab and international levels were discussed during the meeting.

Canadian Foreign Minister Clark Departs 11 Mar

NC1103171991 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1615 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Text] Joe Clark, Canadian secretary of state for external affairs, and the delegation accompanying him left Damascus this afternoon following a two-day visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. Clark was seen off at Damascus International Airport by Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs; the directors of America and protocol departments in the foreign ministry; and the Canadian ambassador in Damascus.

Soviet Power Minister Talks With Al-Zu'bi 7 Mar

NC0703200291 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1700 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Damascus, 7 Mar (SANA)—This afternoon Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi received USSR Minister of Power and Electrification Yuriy Semenov, chairman of the joint Syrian-Soviet Committee for economic, scientific, and technical cooperation.

Dr. Kamil al-Baba, minister of electricity; Dr. Sabah Baqjaji, state minister for planning affairs; and the Soviet ambassador in Damascus attended the meeting.

The meeting addressed various aspects of economic, techincal, and scientific cooperation and progress in Syrian energy-related projects using Soviet expertise.

Energy Cooperation Protocol Signed

NC0703204991 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1915 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] A protocol for the working session between the heads of the two sides of the permanent USSR-Syrian committee for economic, scientific, and technical cooperation was signed this evening at the State Planning Establishment.

The protocol was signed for the Syrian Arab side by Dr. Sabah Baqjaji, minister of state for planning affairs, and for the USSR by Mr. Yuriy Semenov, minister of power and electrification. Attending the ceremony were the minister plenipotentiary of economic affairs at the USSR embassy in Damascus, the assistants of the minister of power and electrification and the minister of planning, the staff of the USSR Embassy in Damascus, and the technicians of the State Planning Establishment.

Talks between the two sides focused on the energy projects being implemented in Syria in cooperation with the USSR. These include the Tishrin thermal station, the Tishrin dam, and power lines, in addition to cooperation in other areas.

Following the ceremony, two cordial speeches were made. The speakers underlined the results which were achieved thanks to the joint efforts being exerted and the sincere desire to promote and widen the horizons of cooperation between the two friendly countries.

Soviet Minister Departs 8 Mar

NC0803201291 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1730 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Text] Damascus, 8 Mar (SANA)—Yuriy Semenov, Soviet power and electrification minister and head of the Soviet delegation to the meetings of the joint Syrian-Soviet committee for economic, scientific, and technical cooperation, and his accompanying delegation left Damascus for home today after a visit of several days to Syria.

He was seen off at Damascus International Airport by Dr. Sabah Baqjaji, minister of state for planning affairs; Soviet Ambassador in Damascus Aleksandr Zotov; senior officials at the Ministries of Planning and Electricity; and senior Soviet Embassy staff.

During the visit, the Soviet guest held talks with a number of ministers as part of preparations for the next session of the committee, scheduled to be held in Moscow this summer.

Commentary on Need for Mideast Peace Conference

NC1303022991 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1240 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] During a meeting with the Canadian secretary of state for external affairs, President Hafiz al-Asad stressed the importance of implementing the Security Council resolutions on the region and of dealing with the region's issues from a single just perspective.

President al-Asad had earlier explained the same point to U.S. President George Bush at their meeting in Geneva. Observers viewed the U.S. President's statement on the need to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict in accordance with Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 as a fruit of this meeting and a result of Syria's efforts with the international community. Double standards cannot be used in dealing with Middle East issues, especially as the Palestinian issue has been festering for more than 40 years and Israel has thus far refused to

submit to the international will and implement UN resolutions and is working to Judaize the occupied Arab territories.

Shamir went even further when he countered the new U.S. trend by asserting that the occupied Arab territories will not be returned, that Jerusalem will remain the capital of Israel, and that the Golan is an indivisible part of Israel.

Syria stood firmly on the side of the international community in condemning the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. It did so out of its belief that one Arab cannot stab his brother in the back and that the invasion threatened the foundations of joint Arab action and provided a pretext for Israel to continue defying UN resolutions, to encroach upon the the Palestinian people's rights and land, and to expand its presence in this land at the expense of the very existence of the Palestinian people.

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait ended with the liberation of this country and the restoration of its sovereignty and legitimate government. Such a result would not have been possible had it not been for the firm Arab stand against the Iraqi Government and the solid support for the international will displayed by Syria, Egypt, and the Gulf states.

The foreign ministers of these countries held a series of meetings which culminated with the signing of the Damascus Declaration. This declaration lays down the bases for sound and effective joint Arab action and establishes a unified Arab position in dealing with the region's developments.

Indeed, agreement was reached at the meeting of the eight Arab foreign ministers with U.S. Secretary of State Baker on the importance of holding an international conference for peace in the Midde East. This conference provides the approriate framework for finding a genuine solution that will secure Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories and the Palestinian people's legitimate rights.

Secretary Baker is currently making a tour of the region and sounding out views prior to a serious move to establish a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. It is natural for Israel to rush to use all pressure levers, including the Zionist lobby, to stall this just peace process. Israel is a hostile and expansionist entity that feeds on and exercises terrorism on a wide scale. It is also natural for the Arabs to add their efforts to those of Syria, Egypt, and the Gulf states, first to enhance the Arab position and second to assist the Iraqi people in their current revolution to rid themselves of those who drove them into the disaster and to rejoin their Arab family as an active and effective member which has an important role to play.

The Iraqi regime has squandered the resources of this people for 10 years in adventures that brought disasters on the nation. The time has come for the Iraqi people to regain their freedom, assert their will, control their resources, and become a factor for stability in the region, assisting and defending their brothers. The more the Arabs are united, the more stable and prosperous will be the region and the more will Arabs regain their rights and put an end to the Israeli occupation and belligerence. This is the esence of the current Arab move. It is a move for the sake of Palestine and the occupied territories and for the sake of a peaceful future for all Arabs.

Paper Says Iraqi 'Revolt' Must Achieve Objectives

NC1103132891 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0545 GMT 11 Mar 91

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "The Popular Revolt in Our Beloved Iraq," AL-BA'TH says: We cannot find any regime that has harbored this indescribable enmity toward the homeland, people, and nation more than the Iraqi regime. The Baghdad ruler and his aides have been stripped of all human values, norms, and charters. They have shown unprecedented selfishness. They have begun their conspiracies against our beloved Iraq and the Arab nation since they assumed power. The destruction, killing, and torture inflicted on the Iraqi people and army have become indescribable. Their black record can take no more of such horrendous crimes.

The paper says: The people and Army of Iraq have the right to revolt against and topple the ruling clique. They have the right to throw it into the dark abyss of history to terminate a long nightmare of suffering and hardship. The people and Armed Forces of Iraq have the right to return to their pan-Arab status, which has been obliterated for 12 years. These years have constituted a dark night that took Iraq away from its nation and isolated it from the arena of conflict against the Zionist enemy.

AL-BA'TH adds: The growing popular revolt in our beloved Iraq must reach its full scope and attain its objectives, despite all means of killing deployed by the tyrants. Such practices have become an indivisible part of the regime's familiar crimes against the people, homeland, and nation.

Concluding, AL-BA'TH says: Irrespective of the ruling regime's bloody terrorism and oppression, the revolution will triumph and will destroy the thrones of those whose hands have been stained with the people's blood.

Afghanistan

Foreign Ministry Lodges Protest With Pakistan

LD1203190191 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] The Directorate of Information and Publication at the Foreign Ministry reports that the charge d'affaires of the Pakistan Embassy in Kabul was summoned this afternoon to the Foreign Ministry. He was handed a letter by the director of the ministry's First Political Department regarding the designs and efforts of certain Pakistani circles, along with opposition groups, on the intensification of far-ranging and organized attacks in some parts of the country, especially in Khowst, to be launched in the second half of March. The letter said:

According to information from Afghan security and intelligence sources, designs have recently been drawn up and efforts made by certain Pakistani circles, along with extremist groups of the opposition, to organize and intensify organized and widespread attacks in parts of the country, mainly in Khowst in the second half of March. According to that information, Pakistani military personnel are directly [words indistinct] in the designing, inciting, arming, and administration and command of the attacks. These acts are organized at such a time when most of Pakistan's political forces, circles, and personalities are welcoming recent rational, well-argued, and opening proposals by the leadership of the Republic of Afghanistan on ways to end confrontation and tension, ensure the enhancement of bilateral cooperation, and consider the national interests and trends of the people of the two countries.

While we note all those futile efforts to intensify tension between the two countries and consider the efforts of those circles to create obstacles and silence efforts for a political and peaceful solution, we are fully confident that the Afghan Armed Forces, now more than ever, are capable of neutralizing and disrupting those designs.

We once again emphasize the wish and will of the Republic of Afghanistan to end hostility and confrontation and ensure and expand cooperation. We call on Pakistan's senior leaders to be sensible and not allow certain circles in that country organize these acts; otherwise, those circles, efforts, and acts will lead to consequences that do not comply with the interests and trends of the people of the two neighborly countries for peace and security and ensure cooperation and friendly relations.

Mujahidin Kill 12 Kabul Soldiers in Paktia

BK1103090891 Islamabad Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Text] In Afghanistan, 12 Kabul troops were killed and seven injured when the mujahidin attacked the border cantonment of (Khord) in Paktia Province. According to reports, three [words indistinct] of the Kabul troops were also killed during the attack. A large quantity of arms and ammunition was seized by the mujahidin and four Kabul troops defected from the (Khord) cantonment.

Four Kilograms of Explosives Found in Kabul

LD1203234191 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Organs of the Ministry of State Security today discovered four kg of explosives. These explosives were brought from Lowgar Province by warmongering extremists planning to organize explosions in crowded regions of Kabul city.

Bangladesh

Ershad Release Demanded; Moazzam Hussain Freed

BK1203161291 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Acting chairman of Jatiya Party Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, addressing a public meeting at Rangpur this afternoon, demanded release of deposed President Ershad immediately. He also called upon the government not to do anything contrary to the constitutional provisions in handing over power to any quarters.

Hearing of the writ petition challenging the detention order of former President Ershad and his wife was held today. The hearing will resume tomorrow.

A high court bench today ordered former Deputy Prime Minister Shah Moazzam Hussain freed from detention under the Special Powers Act if he is not required to be kept in jail in any other connection. The UNB [UNITED NEWS OF BANGLADESH] says Mr. Moazzam has been released from his detention.

'Billions' in Foreign Aid Unaccounted For

BK1303090891 Hong Kong AFP in English 0852 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Dhaka, March 13 (AFP)—Billions of dollars in foreign aid handed to Bangladesh under deposed former president Hussain Mohammad Ershad are unaccounted for, according to press reports Wednesday citing an official enquiry.

Only about 25 per cent of the seven billion dollars in aid was actually spent in the country, and nearly half of that went to corrupt officials and businessmen in bribes, a government task force appointed to investigate economic mismanagement under Mr. Ershad has reported. "Only a quarter of the foreign aid was spent in Bangladesh," the press reports quoted a preliminary task force report as saying.

The fate of the remaining 5.25 billion dollars received during the near nine-year rule of Mr. Ershad had yet to be explained, according to the task force set up by Acting

President Shahabuddin Ahmed following the overthrow of Mr. Ershad in December.

The English language NEW NATION newspaper quoted the report submitted to the government last week as saying that of the 25 per cent of foreign aid spent in Bangladesh, 12 per cent went in bribes to corrupt importers, engineers and officials.

The task force of experts drawn from the Government Planning Commission and the Institute of Development Studies was one of a number of bodies formed to identify major socio-economic problems and suggest immediate measures for poverty alleviation. The steps were taken in the wake of widespread allegations of economic mismanagement by Mr. Ershad, an Army general who came to power in a 1982 bloodless coup.

The paper also quoted planning commission sources as saying that the debt burden of this poverty-striken South Asian nation of 110 million people had risen to about 10 billion dollars from around three billion in 1982. The task force also recommended caution in accepting fresh foreign aid for Bangladesh, which relies on aid to finance most of its development budget and about two-thirds of its trade deficit. The paper also alleged that Mr. Ershad had not only misused foreign aid but had stashed money in foreign banks accounts. The amount could be between several hundred million and few billion dollars, it said.

Student Clashes Close Dhaka Medical College

BK1203161091 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] The Salimullah Medical College in Dhaka has been closed down for an indefinite period from today. News agency UNB [UNITED NEWS OF BANGLADESH] says the authorities have asked the male students in the college to vacate the halls by 1900 this evening. They have also asked the girl students to leave by 1000 tomorrow. The step follows a clash between two groups of students.

Third National Population Census Begins 12 Mar

BK1203133891 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External Service in English 1230 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] The third national population census began in Bangladesh from midnight Monday night. The floating population [words indistinct] railway station, bus and launch terminals were counted during the first hours of the census night. Nearly 300,000 enumerators and supervisors have been employed to complete the population counting over a period of four days.

Preparations for the census began in 1987 and it is likely to cost about 400 million taka. The UN Fund for Population Activities, the World Bank, and the Dutch Government will jointly provide $5.5 million for this purpose. A preliminary report of the census is expected after two months while the final report will take about three months.

India

Reportage on Dissolution of Parliament

Raja Sabha Adjourns

BK1203132691 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] The Raja Sabha witnessed noisy scenes for about 15 minutes before it adjourned for the day. After adopting the statutory resolution in regard to extension of president's rule in Assam, the deputy chairman, Dr. Najma Heptulla, indicated that the statutory resolution on Punjab and the salary and allowances bill for members of parliament would be taken up tomorrow. The opposition members belonging to the Telugu Desam, Asom Gana Parishad, and the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] insisted that the entire business be completed today itself and the house adjourn sine die. The Congress-I members, however, were in favor of taking up the two items tomorrow morning.

Amidst heated exchanges, the leader of the house, Mr. Yashwant Sinha, assured the members that postponing the business for tomorrow has no motive except to conveniently carry through the bills. After the secretary general informed the chair that the president's assent to the Punjab bill is still to be received, Dr. Najma Heptulla adjourned the house for the day.

Lok Sabha Adjourns

BK1203145691 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] The Lok Sabha has been adjourned sine die. Earlier, the parliament had approved the 75th Constitution Amendment Bill, clearing the way for extension of president's rule in Punjab beyond the 10th of May this year and the statutory resolution of the continuance of president's rule in Assam beyond the 27th of May this year. The bill was adopted today by the Raja Sabha by 155 votes in favor and four against, whereas the resolution was adopted by 113 votes in favor and 60 against respectively. The bill and resolution were passed by the Lok Sabha yesterday.

The Lok Sabha adopted a bill today proposing increases in salaries and allowances of members of Parliament [MP's]. An amendment providing for pensions to those MP's who complete the period of at least one year was accepted, besides some government amendments. The bill was passed without discussion; however, Mr. A.K. Roy, Marxist Coordination Committee, opposed the bill, saying that the house does not have any right to accrue benefits to itself when it has failed in securing the financial and other interests of the general public.

Shekhar on President's Rule

BK1203163291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] The Lok Sabha has adjourned sine die amidst expectations of an imminent dissolution of the house. Before the speaker, Mr. Rabi Ray, adjourned the house shortly before 2000 this evening, the house disposed of the last item on the agenda by adopting a statutory resolution which provided for extension of president's rule in Punjab for six months beyond the 10th of May. Discussion on the resolution went along party lines and the Janata Dal members walked out in protest reiterating their stand against postponement of elections in the state. The BSP [Bahujan Samaj Party], the Akali Dal, and some independent members from Punjab also raised loud protest at the time of the passage of the bill, demanding holding of immediate assembly elections.

Replying to the discussion, the prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, said that the government had agreed to hold talks with militants at the Golden Temple in Amritsar as proposed by them. At the same time, he clarified that the government's offer does not mean that the talks can be held anywhere outside India. The prime minister asserted that if any attempt from outside is made to interfere in the affairs of the country, the people will give a befitting reply. Those trying to foment trouble with outside help will also be sternly dealt with. He made it clear that while the government will not shy away even from talking to proponents of Khalistan, any demand for a separate state will be rejected outrightly as a foolish idea. He sought a categorical assurance from politicians that democratic institutions in the state will not be misused to shatter democracy itself following elections.

The other legislative business for the Lok Sabha today was adoption of a bill enhancing salary and allowances of the members of the Parliament [MP's]. An amendment providing for pension to MP's who have completed one year in office was accepted. The bill was passed without discussion after Mr. A.K. Roy, Marxist Coordination Committee, and two other members walked out in protest when the speaker turned down their demand for division.

The house met only for an hour in the morning and adjourned till 1700 after failing to have a consensus on the salary bill. During this brief session, acrimonious exchanges took place between the deputy prime minister and two BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] members, during which Mr. Devi Lal asserted that no party, MLA's [members of legislative assemblies], or MP's want elections now. He said the Lok Sabha should be allowed to continue if members are concerned about the interests of the country. He disclosed that MP's from some parties had approached him for a way out of the present situation. He advised them to go to the president defying their party leaders and request Mr. Venkataraman that the Lok Sabha should not be dissolved.

The parliamentary affairs minister, Mr. S.P. Malaviya, observed that the government does not have any second thoughts on its decision recommending dissolution of the Lok Sabha.

Shekhar Calls For Midterm Election

BK1203131091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] The prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, says a midterm poll is inevitable if there is no way out of the present political crisis. Addressing newsmen at Chitorgarh Fort, Rajasthan, this afternoon, he said that no one had approached him for any patch up or for an alternative arrangement to resolve the problem. He said he still held the view that the condition is not congenial for a poll. He said the matter is now before the president and only when he makes the announcement for an election, his government can make arrangements for the poll.

President Orders New Lok Sabha

BK1303084291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] The Lok Sabha has been dissolved. The presidential order under Clause 2 of Article 85 of the Constitution to this effect was issued in New Delhi this afternoon. A press communique issued by Rashtrapati Bhavan [President's House] said the president has also directed the constitution of the new Lok Sabha on or before the 5th of June. An official notification in this regard will be published in due course.

The communique said the dissolution of the Lok Sabha has been ordered as the Union Council of Ministers headed by Mr. Chandra Shekhar has already resigned and recommended a fresh poll. It said no political party has staked the claim to form an alternative government. The communique said the house is being dissolved after all necessary budgetary and other legislative matters have been passed by both houses of parliament.

The communique further said that a number of representations were made to the president in favor of and against dissolution of the Lok Sabha. The president consulted eminent lawyers and jurists and also party leaders and decided that it will be safer to have the financial provisions passed by parliament.

Parties Welcome May Elections

BK1303130591 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Excerpts] The Lok Sabha has been dissolved ending a week-long political uncertainty at the center. It is to be followed by midterm polls and a new house is to be constituted by the fifth of June. A Rashtrapati Bhavan [President's House] communique issued today says the ninth Lok Sabha has been dissolved since all necessary budgetary and legislative business has been passed by both houses of parliament. [passage omitted]

Our correspondent reports that Mr. Chandra Shekhar will continue as caretaker prime minister. The Rashtrapati Bhavan communique recalls that while accepting the resignation of Mr. Chandra Shekhar on the sixth of this month, the president had requested him to continue in office till alternative arrangements were made.

Major political parties have welcomed the president's decision to dissolve the Lok Sabha. The Janata Dal-S expressed happiness that the president accepted the recommendations of the prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar. The party spokesman, Mr. S.P. Malaviya, said the Janata Dal-S is ready for polls and it will make the Chandra Shekhar government's performance during the last four months the electoral issue.

The Congress-I says the prime minister's resignation was preplanned and indicated a tie-up between Mr. Chandra Shekhar, the opposition, and the speaker. The party spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, at a briefing in New Delhi said the Congress-I stands on the [Janata Dal-S] governments of Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat will be finalized in a day or two.

The prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, has said that the Lok Sabha elections will be held in the last week of May. Talking to newsmen at Raj Bhavan [governor's house] in Patna this afternoon, he said his party is yet to take a decision to form an electoral alliance with any other party.

The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader, Mr. L.K. Advani, hoped that the Election Commission will soon announce a detailed schedule of the election for constituting the 10th Lok Sabha before the fifth of June.

The Congress-I president, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, told UNI [UNITED NEWS OF INDIA] that his party had been calling for it [elections] from the day Mr. Chandra Shekhar resigned.

The CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] leader, Mr Somnath Chatterji, said the Left parties are fully prepared to accept the mandate of the people.

The Janata Dal leader, Mr. M.S. Gurupadswamy, said the proclamation has eliminated any scope for political middleman to operate.

The Forward Bloc leader, Mr. Chitta Basu, said his party is prepared to face the electorate.

The CPI [Communist Party of India] leader, Mr. M. Farooqi, said his party is ready for the elections.

The Himachal Pradesh chief minister, Mr. Shanta Kumar, welcoming the dissolution of the Lok Sabha, said in Simla today that this was essential in the present political instability at the center. The West Bengal chief minister, Mr Jyoti Basu, also welcomed the decision of the president to dissolve the Lok Sabha.

The chief election commissioner, Mr. T.N. Seshan, says he has started the process of consultations with the authorities concerned and organizations for the forthcoming elections to the Lok Sabha. This was announced by the official spokesman in New Delhi today.

BJP Leader Sees Ayodhya Dispute as Campaign Issue

BK1203131891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] The leader of the opposition, Mr. L.K. Advani, has said that dissolution of the Lok Sabha is only a question of hours and a day or two at the most. He was talking to newsmen in New Delhi this afternoon. Mr. Advani said the Ayodhya issue [dispute over Hindu temple-Muslim mosque site] will figure prominently in the elections.

Governor Confirms High Security Alert in Kashmir

BK1303011991 Hong Kong AFP in English 2029 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Jammu, India, March 12 (AFP)—India sounded a high security alert along Kashmir's border with Pakistan Tuesday and sent troop reinforcements to the region to combat infiltration by Moslem separatists, Governor Girish Chander Saxena said here.

Mr. Saxena said the steps had been taken following intelligence reports that some 5,000 militants trained by the Pakistan Army were waiting to sneak into India from across the border. He said security was boosted to plug infiltration routes opened up by melting snows in the mountains surrounding Kashmir, adding that troops and border guards had been asked to shoot infiltrators who did not surrender.

New Delhi accuses Pakistan of harbouring, training and arming Moslem militants fighting against Kashmir's 1947 accession to India. Pakistan, which disputes Kashmir's ownership and holds the territory's northern third, denies the charge.

Mr. Saxena, 63, said security forces had also intensified patrols in the valley of Kashmir, where violence linked to the anti-Indian campaign has left 2,191 people dead since January 1990. The Kashmir dispute is the chief bone of contention and the cause of two of the three wars between India and Pakistan.

Factory Develops Inexpensive T-52 Decoy Tanks

BK1203150791 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] The Kanpur-based Ordnance Parachute Factory has designed and developed T-52 decoy tank. This dummy tank has been produced at a cost of 1.5 lakh rupees which is much less than the French decoy tank used by Iraq during the recent Gulf war costing 8 lakh rupees. The factory is also manufacturing items such as the one used in mountaineering. These items are considered to be the best in the world.

Commentary Examines Bush's Middle East Plan

BK0803124491 Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 8 Mar 91

[A.S. Abrahm commentary]

[Text] Perhaps the most significant part of the four-point West Asian peace and security plan that President Bush outlined in his address to the joint session of the U.S. Congress in Washington on Thursday [7 March] is his proposal to seek an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict, especially the Palestinian dispute. Specifically, Mr. Bush has called for the implementation of UN Resolutions 242 and 338 which require the Israelis to vacate the territories they have occupied since 1967, mainly the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and the Golan Heights in Syria. The resolutions also require all states in the region to live in peace—an implicit reference to allowing Israel to exist as a legitimate state.

In brief, this is the famous territory for peace formula. The American secretary of state, Mr. James Baker, is now in West Asia to hammer out the details of the Bush plan. Interestingly, the PLO has welcomed the Bush proposal. But the Israelis predictably have expressed their apprehensions over it. During the conflict with Iraq, the U.S. was adamant about not linking the Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait with the resolution of the Palestinian question, the linkage which President Saddam Husayn conceived as a post facto justification of an illegal action. By and large the world did not buy the Iraqi leader's attempt to make its withdrawal conditional. Even so, as a result of the Gulf conflict the Palestinian question, as well as the Arab-Israeli dispute as a whole, are back on the global front runner. Syria, Iraq's long-standing rival, was part of the American coalition formed to evict Iraq from Kuwait. Israel, of course, is a staunch U.S. ally.

President Bush must now demonstrate that he is even-handed. If Israel is to be rewarded for having restrained itself while Iraqi Scud missiles regularly fell on it, Syria too must benefit by having the Golan Heights restored to it. What is more, no secured order for West Asia can be built so long as the Arab-Israeli and the Israeli-Palestinian questions remain as festering sores. It has often been argued that settling these conflicts does not necessarily mean stability in the region since inter-Arab and Arab-Iranian conflicts are likely to continue. There is a great deal of truth in this, and the allegations, denied by Tehran that the Iranians are behind the Shiite-led uprising in southern Iraq, are further evidence of the deep-seated and mutual original suspicions which break out into open conflict every now and then. Even so, that can hardly be an argument for allowing the whole gamut of Arab-Israeli questions to remain unresolved.

The aftermath of the Gulf conflict has once again exposed Palestinian vulnerability. Thousands of them are reported to have collaborated with the Iraqi occupiers whose presence in the country after the 2d August invasion was particularly brutal and merciless. U.S. Embassy sources in Kuwait have, however, denied these reports. Furthermore, the Palestinians made their support of President Saddam Husayn's (?game) for the world to see. Everytime a Scud missile landed in Israel, they cheered. But to argue from this that they should be punished and Israel allowed to pursue with its annexation of the occupied territory would be both unjust and shortsighted. The Palestinians have acted more out of desperation than enthusiasm. The concessions they made in the past, including the implicit recognition of Israel, brought them no political dividends. They remain the political football of the world and the Arab states to be kicked around at will.

That is why the American initiative is such a good move. It demonstrates that the world's only superpower, committed as it is to building a new and stable postwar order in West Asia, intends to be an impartial arbiter and not to allow its judgment to be clouded by the special pleading of political lobbies.

Sharma To Visit Seychelles, Mauritius, Maldives

BK0803132091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1030 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Text] The vice president, Dr. Shanker Dayal Sharma, left New Delhi a short while ago on an eight-day official visit to Seychelles, Mauritius, and Maldives. During his two-day visit to Seychelles he will meet President France Albert Rene. Dr. Sharma will attend the 23d Independence Day celebrations of Mauritius as the chief guest. Before returning home, he will visit Maldives for three days.

Vice President Visits Seychelles, Mauritius

WA1303151591

For Delhi Radio reports on the visit to the Seychelles and Mauritius by Vice President Shankar Dayal Sharma, see the Southern Africa section of the 13 March Sub-Saharan Africa DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Iran

Khamene'i Says Nation's 'Salvation' Lies in Islam

LD1303112391 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Excerpts] On the eve of the holy month of Ramadan, the leader of the Islamic revolution, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, received a group of clergymen, Frida, imams, and preachers from various regions of the country this morning. Addressing them on the role of the clergy, the leader of the Islamic revolution graciously said:

The clergy has always remained in the first rank of struggle throughout history. [passage omitted] In another part of his remarks, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i referred to the hardship imposed on the Muslim and oppressed people of Iraq for many years, saying: Those

who claim to support human rights have remained silent in the face of the pressure exerted on the Iraqi nation today. This silence is a sign of their indifference vis-a-vis the rights of nations and human beings. This stems from their bullying and colonial nature. The path of the Iraqi nation's salvation lies in selflessness based on the instructions of Islam and moving toward the rule of the genuine religion of Islam. Islam is the only means by which the Iraqi nation can remain steadfast and save itself.

The leader of the Islamic revolution expressed deep sorrow and regret on behalf of Islamic Iran for the way the Iraqi Government is treating that country's Muslim people. In conclusion, he graciously said: The army that is facing the Iraqi people today is part of that country's nation. The Iraqi Army is therefore forbidden by religion to open fire on the people. The oppressed nation of Iraq is facing a big test and in the struggle against the aggressors, it should follow the example of the Iranian nation.

More on Speech to Clergy

LD1303141391 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1104 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Speech by Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i, leader of the Islamic revolution, to clergymen in Tehran on 13 March—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. [passage omitted] The world today is run by the most cruel bullies who have taken power. It is run by those who have combined cruelty with deception, tyranny, false propaganda, and even claims of spirituality on certain occasions. They claim to support human rights and oppressed nations. Such oppressive and tyrannical power and such pretentions of support for mankind and humanity have trapped some nations today and kept them in chains.

You can see the fate of the Iraqi nation today. Unfortunately, because of this sinister policy which has ruled for a number of years and is still ruling over the State of Iraq, the Iraqi nation is suffering today. They were dragged into a war against Iran. They were forced to shoulder difficult tasks and commit fratricide in an unwanted war. Then there was the issue of the attack by the multinational forces. You can see their situation today and how much pressure is exerted on these committed and innocent people. Islam will save them. If the Iraqi nation wishes salvation, it should adhere to Islam. They should defend Islam; they should demonstrate selflessness as Islam instructs; and they should move toward the rule of Islam. [crows shouts approval]

The same alleged supporters of human rights have remained silent in the face of the pressure which is exerted on Iraq. On one hand, the human rights supporters raise a hue and cry over minor incidents; on the other hand, they remain silent in the face of an event which is putting pressure on a nation. This silence stems from their bullying and colonialist nature and their indifference to the rights of nations and human beings, and the same lying that they have always pursued.

I would like to say one sentence about the Iraqi nation: We are truly distressed, sad, and sorry for what is happening to this nation. We regret to see that those who claim to be governing Iraq are treating the Iraqi nation in this manner. They kill the Iraqi people. They target the Iraqi people with chemical gases, on the basis of some reports that we have not fully confirmed yet. They demolish their houses on top of their heads. Their cities were once bombed by the multinational forces and then by government forces. The nation has suffered. This is a great test for the Iraqi people.

They have organized fratricide among the Iraqi people. This Army that is facing the people today is part of the same Iraqi people. It is religiously unlawful for the Iraqi Army to open fire on the Iraqi nation. [crowd shouts approval] What is capable of liberating that nation is steadfastness and reliance on God. They should study the fate of the Iranian nation and see what Almighty God granted to this nation in gratitude for their steadfastness. They should follow that example and act accordingly. [passage omitted]

More Iraqi Refugees Arrive; 12,000 Total

LD1203142391 Tehran IRNA in English 1334 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Ahvaz, Mar. 12, IRNA—With the arrival of 1,401 more Iraqi refugees in Iran over the past 48 hours, the number of Iraqi nationals taking refuge in the Islamic Republic reached 12,000. The newly-arrived group included 739 women and 662 men. The number of Iraqis fleeing to Iran is on the increase. On Tuesday, a group from al-Basrah and al-Tannumah crossed into Iran by bicycle and cart.

Two of the refugees, interviewed by IRNA claimed that a large number of houses and cars had been set ablaze in the attacks of government forces on al-Basrah and al-Tannumah.

'Ali Hamidah, a resident of al-Basrah said his wife and children had been killed and his house demolished in an Iraqi air raid on al-Basrah. 'Ali Muhammad Mansur, who has come from al-Tannumah by cart along with his brother, said on their way to Iran, his brother was wounded by shrapnels from artillery and mortar shells fired by Iraqi troops.

Velayati, France's Dumas Hold Contact on Gulf

LD1203132891 Tehran IRNA in English 0943 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, March 12, IRNA—Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati in a telephone conversation with his French counterpart Roland Dumas Monday night discussed the latest developments in the Persian Gulf after cease-fire last month.

The security in the Persian Gulf region and the recent developments in Iraq were discussed by the two foreign ministers.

Both sides were of the view that the Iraqi nation must decide their own fate and other countries have no right to interfere in internal affairs of that country.

Dumas expressed the hope to visit Iran in the near future.

Va'ezi Leaves for Switzerland 13 Mar

LD1303095891 Tehran IRNA in English 0921 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, March 13, IRNA—Deputy Foreign Minister for Euro-America Mahmud Va'ezi left here for Bern Wednesday morning on an official visit. The visit is taking place in reply to last summer visit to Tehran of his Swiss counterpart Klaus Jacobi.

During the visit, Va'ezi is scheduled to hold talks with Swiss Foreign Ministry officials on Tehran-Bern bilateral ties as well as international issues.

Baker's Postwar Middle East Tour Analyzed

LD1203200591 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1110 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State James Baker began the second leg of his first Middle East tour in the wake of the Persian Gulf war by arriving in Israel. On the first leg of his tour, Baker visited the Arab capitals of Riyadh, Kuwait, and Cairo, and conferred with their leaders, after which the U.S. secretary of state pursued his regional mission by taking part in Riyadh in a joint session of the foreign ministers of the eight Arab countries allied with the United States.

Baker's talks with the Arab leaders have encompassed two principle axes. The first axis concerned the means of curbing factors conducive to political instability, military insecurity, and economic crisis among the signatories of the eight-power treaty [Damascus Declaration]. The second axis concerns the means of resolving the long-running Palestinian crisis. Whereas a number of reports pertaining to the first axis of the talks have indicated differences in the views of and the absence of general agreement between the Arab leaders and the U.S. secretary of state, there is a convergence of views among the political experts with regard to the second axis in that there are numerous obstacles in the way of attaining a general agreement on ways of resolving the Middle East crisis. Hence, the United States faces major political irregularities in the third phase of the political-military crisis of the Persian Gulf, which renders it unable to take its victory to beyond an irreversible phase. Even though the United States thinks the present turbulence in the Arab world, the position of the right-wing faction, and the coalition of its eight Arab allies stretching from the Persian Gulf to the borders of the occupied Palestine have provided it with a suitable opportunity for establishing peace between the Arab states and Israel, nevertheless the existence of differences between the three axes comprising the Arabs, Israel, and the United States, on the one hand, and the neglect shown by those three axes toward the wishes of the Muslim Palestinian nation and the general opinions of the Islamic world, on the other, have cast a gloomy shadow over any prospects of achieving a fundamental and lasting peace in the region and a political victory for the United States.

There are three areas on which U.S. and Israeli opinions differ from those of the Arabs. The Arab countries, in spite of their displeasure with the stances and actions of 'Arafat with respect to the Persian Gulf crisis, regard the PLO as the official representative of the Palestinians and the Palestinian government-in-exile and demand its participation in peace talks, an issue that has met with intense objections from the United States and Israel. The second area of difference concerns the future political position of Palestine in the wake of the israeli withdrawal. While the Arabs support the establishment of an independent state of Palestine, the United States and Israel are decisively opposed to it. The third problem is that of the convergence of Arab views with regard to the convention of an international Middle East peace conference attended by all the parties involved, in addition to the United States and the Soviet Union. At present, the United States is opposed to the convention of such a conference, while Israel has voiced its categorical objection to its convention.

Israel and the United States, too, hold different views in three areas. Israel regards Jerusalem as its capital, and depsite the Security Council resolutions on the necessity of an Israeli pullout from all the territories occupied in 1967, that regime continues to persist in its resolve. The second area concerns Israel's objection to the U.S. proposal regarding the exchange of territory in return for peace and security, since it holds that territory and peace are unrelated, and that peace can be established without the need to withdraw from the territories. The third area concerns Israel's insistence on Shamir's plan based on the granting of autonomy to the Palestinians within the framework of talks with selected representatives from the 1967 occupied territories of Palestine, whereas Bush favors resolution of the Middle East crisis on the bases of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which lay emphasis on an Israeli pullout from the territories occupied in 1967.

Meanwhile, Baker's insistence that the United States does not connect the Middle East peace process trend to continued assistance for Israel indicates that the United States is not prepared to impose the slightest bit of pressure on Israel in its implementation of Security Council resolutions, an issue that can only be construed as the need for an unconditional Arab submission to the wishes of Israel, because otherwise, it would spell a defeat for the United States. However, aside from all this, the principal problem for the U.S., Israeli, and Arab

politicians is that in the age of the awakening of nations and their presence in the political forums, they have failed to note that principal factor in their equations, and continue to try to resolve the problem without taking into consideration its historical roots. The United States must realize that the Zionist tree that was planted in that region by Britain has no roots and that it principal solution can only be found in the severance of support and backing for that regime. Only then will the security that prevailed over that part of the world under the shadow of Islam for centuries once again be restored to that region.

Radio Notes Bush's Hopes for Better Relations

NC1003081891 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 10 Mar 91

[Text] The U.S. President desires better ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran. In an interview with Arab correspondents in Washington, Bush said that he wants better ties with Tehran. He said he had no hostility against Iran.

Khamene'i Addresses Media Officials on Tasks

LD1303001191 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1600 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Excerpt] In a meeting this morning with directors and officials of the news and political departments of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Voice and Vision, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, leader of the Islamic Revolution, offered guidelines to those engaged in news matters. He stressed the need to increase the ability to analyze political and social affairs for the people and recalled the importance of news in developing people's general knowledge and political insight. At the meeting, he referred to the importance, delicacy, and difficulty of news gathering and production and added that activities in news matters are political tasks and that these days, the global political circles regard news affairs as one of the most important political activities. On the same basis it can be said that in today's world, a main part of the political influence and authority of major powers is dependent on their news facilities and domination of the news.

Khamene'i pointed out the views and policies of past generations and the news circles in the world have been slanted toward the Islamic Republic of Iran's just and fair stances on international issues. He graciously said that there are many signs from which the direction of world events can be clearly discerned and undoubtedly the balance of events will change in favor of Islam and Iran. In these circumstances, therefore, paying attention to news matters and avoiding mistakes is especially important.

He called the officials and staff engaged in news affairs the artistic and efficient soldiers of the vast Islamic faction. He graciously said that the attraction to news, analyses, and political commentaries is an important principle which must be safeguarded through the proper dissemination of news and commentary texts and the correct reading of the news. Therefore, news affairs activities must be specifically regarded as an artistic task.

Khamene'i referred to the ability of the Persian language to expand to express all nuances. Addressing the news officials and announcers of the Voice and Vision he said: News is the most current of media's spoken words and news texts must enjoy literary and compositional beauty and must be presented with artistry and in the most beautiful and extensive form possible so that all people understand it. This is the artistic task that must be given importance.

In another part of his remarks, he recalled the need for the intellectual and political nourishment of the people through radio and television. News compilation and selection and the writing of news analysis and talks must be based on expanding people's views. Expanding people's minds is one of our objectives and we like them to think in an expansive way, because we believe that the people, by becoming informed about global events, will become immune to the plots and intellectual evil-doings of our enemies.

He urged the Voice and Vission officials and the state's other media to endeavor to enhance their ability to analyze political and socials matters for the people. He graciously said: Your efforts must be focused on this important issue. The people possess the ability for political analysis and correct political insight, because it is under these conditions that many of the problems will be solved by the people themselves.

Khamene'i expressed his appreciation for the services and continuous efforts of the Voice and Vision correspondents, editors, and officials. In conclusion, he remarked that news selection on the basis of one group's interests is treachery against the Islamic system. He pointed out the need to avoid entering factionalism. [passage omitted]

Amnesty Report on Women 'Briefly' Mentions Iran

LD0803194191 Tehran IRNA in English 1758 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Excerpts] London, Mar. 8, IRNA—In its first major report on women victims of human rights violations, the London-based Amnesty International has detailed what it says are "abuses inflicted on women in over 40 countries", in a report published Friday. However, it includes among the victims, teenage girls, pregnant mothers and elderly women, and even "babies". [passage omitted]

The Amnesty report also briefly refers to Iran, giving two examples of what it claims are breaches of human rights. Both the examples given refer to punishments for offences which, if carried out in public, or if publicised, could have an adverse effect on the stability of society.

The first example given by the "Human Rights" group is that of "death by stoning as punishment for adulterers and certain other offenders", although this punishment applies equally to men and women. And the second example was that of "flogging as a punishment for offences such as failure to observe veiling (heijab) or other clothing regulations".

Commentary Reproves UN Over Human Rights Issue

LD0903170191 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1159 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpts] Last Thursday [7 March] the UN Human Rights Commission approved a resolution according to which investigation of the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran will be removed from the agenda of the UN General Assembly.

In this resolution, following efforts by the Islamic Republic of Iran, the topic of human rights violations during the imposed war, especially victims of chemical weapons and war refugees, will be placed on the agenda of the General Assembly and the special rapporteur of the commission will investigate it. [passage omitted]

In addition to removing the accusations hurled at the Islamic Republic of Iran on violating human rights, the report by the special envoy of the UN Human Rights Commission entails the important point that the commission must avoid a selective and politically motivated approach to human rights situations in countries. Such a statement is in fact an admission that the human rights issue is being abused; it is being used as an instrument to bring pressure by some countries against others.

Views from this aspect, one can say that the behavior of the UN Human Rights Commission's toward Iran was such that it had made the Islamic Republic one of the victims in selective and politicized handling of human rights issues. During the years following the victory of the Islamic revolution, human rights have always been used as a weapon against Iran. At times, the UN Human Rights Commission was abusing the human rights issue as a weapon against Iran and on other occasions the London-based Amnesty International used to do so. [passage omitted]

In any case, the removal of human rights violation in Iran from the agenda of the UN General Assembly is a logical move. It is not beyond expectation to see that in yet another opportunity the human rights issue is being politicized with a view to abusing it.

U.S. Censorship of Gulf War News Protested

NC0803223891 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 25 Feb 91 p 24

[Yunes Shekrkhah commentary: "The Free Flow of Information and U.S. Double-Standards"]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] The United States was the pioneer of the belief in "the free flow of information." According to this, nothing should come in the way of providing information. The United States championed this practice because it had the means to disseminate the news. [passage omitted]

Today, the Persian Gulf war demands more than the theory of a "system of international information and communications," and it has unclenched the U.S. fist in this regard. It now is blocking "the free flow of information" and imposing official censorship. The Americans have not even bothered to give any excuses and have even bombarded public opinion! In this war, the United States has embarked on the most humiliating form of censorship:

—To date the Western news media have not carried reports of the effect of the war on the innocent people of Iraq.
—Western casualties have been described as minimal.
—Not a word has been said of the resistance of the other side.
—They have proved that Western media are not a "bridge of communications" between the facts and the audience.
—The Western mass media have explained the "free flow of information" very well; that is, the transformation of the news media into a "military bridge."

The Western news media have made everyone realize that the impediment to "the free flow of information" is "reality." They have proved how brazenly they can act in the "obliteration of facts."

Commentary Speculates on Future of Middle East

NC0803213591 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 26 Feb 91 pp 24, 22

[Mohammad 'Ali Elahi commentary: "A Just War or Surgery With an Axe?"]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] The sincere efforts of the Islamic Republic of Iran and other peace-loving nations of the world could not dash the warmongering hopes of the Pentagon's strategists and planners and, finally, the ground assault began. The reports received about the war cannot be considered reliable as they are under the strict censorship of U.S. intelligence officers, especially the claims about entering Kuwait and capturing over 10,000 Iraqis, all within the first 10 hours of the conflict, seen as evidence of fierce fighting. What is strange is that regarding Western casualties, it was said that only one French soldier had been wounded!

Undoubtedly, the coming days are going to be extremely important and fateful for the Middle East and the rest of the world. They pose innumerable questions for every political observer, including:

1. The fate of Saddam Husayn:

Even though the Iraqi leadership was unable to make any headway against the coalition's military front, Saddam was able to influence public opinion and the feelings of many among the Arab and Islamic masses. The huge demonstrations in Tunis, Morocco, Algeria, and even Europe and America, are evidence of a major military [as published] victory for Saddam Husayn.

Those who praise Saddam comment on his boldness and courage when they speak about his confrontation of the United States and affirmation of the vulnerability of Israel and the reactionaries. They they believe that if alive, he is a hero, and if killed, he is a martyr.

Those who are Saddam's opponents speak of him as a ruthless opportunist who has no aim in life but to save himself and perpetuate his hold over the government. This group compares his conflicting stances: Some days ago he was not even ready to mention Kuwait and continually referred to it as Iraq's 19th province; now he has agreed to a complete withdrawal. They stress that his record has been treacherous and untrustworthy.

One view is that Saddam Husayn was himself deceived, and even though he has laid hundreds of traps [pun on the name "Saddam"—in Persian "sad" means 100, "dam" means trap], he fell into one himself, thus doing exactly what the United States and Israel wanted him to do!

2. Iraq's destiny:

[Passage omitted] The presence of ideological and racial distinctions in Iraq (Kurds and Iraqis) makes it difficult to predict possible alternatives. The main question in the region, however, is whether Iraq's future should be determined by the Iraqi nation or by a general placed there by the United States. It is clear that the interference of militarists in politics has been among the many misfortunes in recent decades of Iraqi history.

3. The fate of Kuwait:

The American companies that had until now been involved in melting their own scrap iron [as published] at the expense of the economic bankruptcy of the Riyadh regime and in extorting the assets of the Kuwaiti rulers have already sharpened their teeth by signing 300 contracts to swallow up the region's remaining resources. They envisage completing the reconstruction of Kuwait in five years at a cost of $60 billion. In this way, in a few years Kuwait will not own even a drop of its own oil.

4. The fate of the Middle East:

Regarding U.S. subsequent objectives in the region, there are some ambiguities. Is the United States seeking to topple Saddam Husayn and his regime? Will the Desert Shield policy continue? Will the United States retain some or all of its forces in the region after the end of the Kuwait adventure? Finally, what will be the fate of the Palestinian issue and the Arab-Israel saga? More clearly, what will be the fate of the struggle of the Islamic ummah against the cancerous Zionist domination?

The United States is undoubtedly determined to interfere in Middle East security and to orchestrate all kinds of Arab-Israeli dialogues by itself. [passage omitted]

It is possible that the United States may keep some small units in the littoral Arab states of the Persian Gulf and delegate the rest of the task to Syria, Egypt, and the littoral countries themselves.

Obviously, the Islamic Republic of Iran—despite the fact that it does not wish to return to the pre-revolution period and be transformed into a regional gendarme—will defend its national interests and those of the Muslims with utmost energy. Regardless of the future course of regional events, the political postures of the leadership, our president, and Majles have made us proud and are worthy of praise.

In conclusion, it may be said that even though the occupation of Kuwait must be condemned, it cannot justify the war crimes of the United States, especially the destruction of Iraq and the revenge taken from the Iraqi nation.

All those who had arms vied to arm Saddam. Now all of them have joined to destroy him or have contented themselves with being spectators to this gross injustice and devastation and forgotten all their commitments.

In his speech last week, George Bush termed the Persian Gulf war a "just" war, but he did not point out where the justice was.

So far as the people who view the war fronts close up in satellite pictures are concerned, they do not perceive any justice in the objectives of the war or the weapons used. It is better, therefore, to label the war surgery with an axe, not a just war.

Neutrality, Jordan's Muslim Brotherhood Viewed

NC1003133091 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 3 Mar 91 p 2

[Majid Reza'iyan commentary: "A Second Look at Iran's Policy of Neutrality"]

[Excerpts] Time and events have revealed certain truths, especially about the war between Iraq and the United States. Time and events have also shown just how wrong were the foreign and domestic supporters of Saddam and critics of Iran's policy of neutrality. Finally, the war revealed the absence of any kind of sincerity in the Ba'th Party's decisionmaking, as this party changes its positions to suit the circumstances. [passage omitted]

In formulating its foreign policy, Iran has drawn on certain contemporary concepts and doctrines, such as the ideas of "neutrality," "nonalignment," and "neither East nor West, only the Islamic Republic."

These concepts may appear quite similiar, but they are vastly different in content. The factors behind the evolution of each of them and the foundation for their

political philosophies underscore their fundamental and inherent differences. The Islamic Republic of Iran has pursued a policy of nonalignment with either of the two power blocs, but it has also demonstrated its total commitment to the destiny of world Muslims. This is the most important objective pursued by the Islamic Republic of Iran, and it is what distinguishes its policy from others. [passage omitted]

Iran's neutrality during the war took the form of not favoring either of the sides involved—those "who ignited the conflagration," in other words—but this did not extend to the "victims" of the war. Appropriate tangible support was extended to Iraqi Muslims and other victims of this devastating war, and this support attracted the attention of many political circles. There are still some people or groups which seek to cast doubt on Iran's policy of active neutrality, but the facts themselves leave no room for doubt or even discussion.

At a recent regional conference, Jordan's Muslim Brotherhood criticized Iran's neutral policy during the war. Such an approach can only stem from an inadequate understanding of the true nature of this war and of Iran's wise and multifaceted policy, and not from any political and revolutionary acumen. It would have been better if the overseas cadres of Jordan's Muslim Brotherhood had opened their mouths to criticize the domineering trend of the United States in the Middle East, especially on their own home ground, instead of passing judgment on Iran's policy of neutrality. One must distinguish, however, between the true masses and lower strata of the Muslim Brotherhood and its overseas cadres, who for years have followed a policy of "silence and compromise." [passage omitted]

Paper Assails Motives Behind Gulf Security Plan

LD1003210191 Tehran IRNA in English 1810 GMT 10 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, Mar. 10, IRNA—In a commentary Sunday the Persian daily KEYHAN said the Persian Gulf security plan is a "superpower device for checking the Islamic Revolution", which is why the West wishes to involve Iran in that plan. It said the rebuilding of Iraq would take a considerbaly long time, and that obviously Iraq is now neither a powerful country nor a threat to the West.

The daily continued that the Persian Gulf littoral states have long since been controlled by a "council", and that geographically farther countries are either powerless or are unable to do anything against the interests of the West because of their reliance on the West.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran is an exception to other states in the region," it said and thought that once Tehran has been involved in that system the Westerners would be happy to win some controlling power on Iran from the aspect of politics, ideology, economy and military hardware.

The commentary warned that the current advances towards Iran by the Saudis as well as similar feelings shown by other sheikhdoms and by Egypt "should be interpreted as a calculated device led by an externally directed system for controlling the Islamic revolution."

Elsewhere the commentary said that the Iraqis had wrongly counted on Moscow immediately before the outbreak of the war, since, it said, they did not take into consideration the countless limitations of the Soviets.

In terms of the timing of their strategy, KEYHAN said the "Iraqis put their bets too late and too unskilfully for the Soviets."

U.S., Soviet Positions on Saddam Evaluated

NC1203010991 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 27 Feb 91 p 2

[Unattributed commentary: "Stopping the War Is Out of Saddam's Control"]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Iraq has finally agreed to withdraw unconditionally from Kuwait, and has instructed its forces to depart Kuwaiti territory as soon as possible. It appears that Baghdad made the decision some weeks ago but announced it too late. [passage omitted]

Now that Saddam has indeed begun a hasty retreat from Kuwait, the allies have increased their pressure from all sides and announced new conditions. It appears highly unlikely that even with Saddam's acceptance of new conditions the knotty problem will be unraveled. This is because they will attribute the acceptance to Saddam's weakness and impose new conditions as time goes on.

Prior to the ground assault, it was Iraq that was trying to "stall for time." Now it is the allies who are stalling for time because they believe that time will work against Saddam's interests. [passage omitted]

Saddam initiated this crisis, but facts and figures indicate that its end is out of his control. Today, the allies are trying to continue the saga and are comtemplating trials for war criminals with Saddam's surrender. James Baker, U.S. secretary of state, seeing the favorable climate at the Security Council, which seems to indicate tacit consent, is pressing for a trial of war criminals and a follow-up on war crimes.

It is clear just to whom this is addressed, and whose trial is being considered. The United States has committed the most crimes and by attacking the civilian areas of Iraq and Kuwait, it has inflicted casualties on the innocent civilians of Iraq and Kuwait, who have been the victims of its crimes. It would be farfetched to think, however, that Baker is talking of American war crimes in this oil war. [passage omitted]

Moscow also damaged Saddam's position with its actions. Its announcement that it would reject all possible requests by Saddam for asylum was the last, decisive shot at the Baghdad regime by the Kremlin leadership, which proved that it had prepared itself to accept Saddam's downfall and concomitant events.

By announcing that it was Saddam who had lost the opportunity for peace, once again Moscow veered to the allies' side. It seems unlikely that Moscow will make any further efforts to save Saddam and test its luck, especially as Moscow's recent actions indicate that the Kremlin leadership is greatly disillusioned with the United States' rejection of Gorbachev's peace plan.

Today, Washington is seeking an end to the Saddam regime and is under pressure from certain Arab leaders in this connection. The Kuwaiti shaykh, the Saudi king, and most of the shaykhs of the littoral states have asked the United States to capitalize on this opportunity for the destruction and ouster of Saddam. They fear the nightmare of the repercussions if Saddam and his regime remain in power, in which case they will face a very uncertain future.

Is it possible that tomorrow some unidentified elements will influence the oil war in some astonishing way? In this fast-changing world, everything is possible.

Commentary on Dubious Gains for United States

NC1103210491 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 27 Feb 91 p 11

[A. Salah commentary: "Victory or Nothing!"]

[Excerpts] Until the last moment the chances of war and peace were 50-50. The Iraqi regime had overlooked many things, but there were some it could not let pass. It was the same with the United States. Then the ground war began. [passage omitted] The Islamic Republic of Iran tried to avert the final phase of the war—a ground assault. The Iraqi regime did not accept the Iranian peace plan for two reasons: 1) This plan did not have any international guarantee, and 2) the acceptance of this plan would have proved the power of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the world, and this was contrary to the interests of the idolatrous regimes.

Iraq responded favorably to the Soviet proposals, however, even though the Soviet Union had voted in favor of the punitive sanctions against Iraq in the Security Council.

In the opinion of the Iraqi leaders, the Soviet Union could muster international guarantees for its peace plan. On the other hand, the peace plan was not acceptable to the United States, which considered the plan harmful for two reasons: 1) It would enhance Soviet political clout in the Middle East, and 2) the initiative to act would be taken from the United States in order to attain peace, and it would be overshadowed by the Soviet Union. This would cast doubts on the United States' position as an unrivaled superpower. [passage omitted]

It is possible that the United States and its allies will achieve a military victory against Saddam, but this will definitely not be a real victory. We hear echoes of the statement uttered 2,000 years ago when an emperor of Rome stood beside a heap of rubble—which was all that was left after the war—and said "Victory or Nothing!"

It is possible that "victory" may in fact bring "nothing" for the West. The servile regimes may also celebrate this victory but posterity will never forget these atrocities. Regardless of the propaganda that this war is against the Iraqi regime, everyone is aware that the Muslims are suffering the hardships, and if the people of Iraq had not been Muslims, the United States and its allies would never have started a war against them.

Commentary Requests War Reparations From Kuwait

NC1103214391 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 28 Feb 91 p 2

[Unattributed commentary: "The Need for Kuwait To Compensate for Its Support to Iraq in the Imposed War"]

[Excerpts] On 19 August 1990 the Kuwaiti foreign minister in exile, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, admitted his extensive cooperation with Iraq on the eve of his visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran. He told a MENA correspondent that during the eight-year war with Iran his country had given $14 billion in financial aid to Iraq and had played an active role in creating a military equilibrium between Iran and Iraq.

Two years after the imposed war and on the eve of the collapse of the Saddam regime and the return of the al-Sabah clan to Kuwait, we can clearly see how the hand of fate listened to the rightful cries of the Muslim people of Iran and exposed the hyprocritical and belligerent faces of the treacherous politicians, dragging them into the mire of humiliation and degradation. [passage omitted]

The Kuwaiti Government was never neutral during the war. With its actions and attitude it had consistently trampled on the norms decreed by the international legal experts of which we can mention the following:

1. Dispatch of forces: A neutral government can never dispatch forces to one of the two warring sides or permit the setting up of an organization for recruiting volunteer forces on its territory. [passage omitted]

2. Placing Kuwaiti territory at the disposal of Iraq: The government should never place its territory at the disposal of the hostile sides, as it is possible that it may be instrumental in bringing about the victory of one and the defeat of the other. [passage omitted]

3. Assistance in the form of cash and loans: A neutral government cannot aid and abet one of the sides in a

conflict by giving loans or collecting charitable contributions for funding the military actions of one of the sides in the conflict and thus to permit one of the sides embroiled in the conflict to collection of public cash contributions on its soil, which legally is a way of aiding the conflict and tantamount to an indirect involvement in the war. [passage omitted]

4. Political and propaganda support: Among other factors that violate neutrality is the political and propaganda support in the course of the war, because the adoption of a policy which in any way indicates a tilt on the part of the neutral government toward one of the hostile sides, is thus a contravention of neutrality.

In the course of the war, we cannot recall that the Kuwaiti Government's publications interrupted even for a moment their hostile stance against Islamic Iran or did not defend Saddam's Qadisiyah [battle in Iraqi history]. The direction and posture of this propaganda was generally based on efforts to overthrow the Iranian regime by including venomous articles to incite Muslim public opinion, and the people in Iraq and Kuwait, against the Islamic Republic of Iran. [passage omitted]

It is appropriate, therefore, that the diplomatic apparatus of the Islamic Republic of Iran should demand reparations for at least part of the damages inflicted on it by Kuwait during the course ofthe war. Perhaps this would be a way to reconcile with the dear and noble people and heal wounds inflicted on them by the avarice of the Kuwaiti leaders, for all the heavy tribulations and debilitating problems that accrued to them in the prolonged war, even though the moral damages are irredeemable.

Editorial on Implications of U.S. Presence

NC1103193991 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 4 Mar 91 pp 1, 2

[Editorial: "Acting From a Responsible Stance"]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. The deep-rooted crisis, of which Iraq's aggression against Kuwait was a tangible manifestation, is not over even with the destruction of Saddam's military machine. Although the Iraqi onslaught has been foiled, it has resulted in more complicated repercussions, and the regional security is in danger of becoming seriously vulnerable.

The most important aspect of these events is the deployment of the NATO forces in the heartland of the oil-rich Islamic world. The justification for these belligerent designs was to save Kuwait from Iraqi aggression. Even though circumstances have changed, there are attempts to project possible dangers and the recurrence of such attacks in order to prove that the United States should remain in the region.

Certainly, those who have paved the way for the deployment of NATO forces in the heartland of the Islamic world and have given legitimacy to the aggression by the U.S. and all NATO forces with their schizophrenic actions should be reprimanded. [passage omitted]

Even though Islamic Iran was the target of the Baghdad regime's savage attacks for eight years, during the war Iran acted in accordance with its humanitarian responsibility and Islamic duty and did not for a moment allow itself to succumb to sentiments, prejudice, or hatred.

From the beginning, Islamic Iran has kept the accounts of the criminal Iraqi regime separate from that of the oppressed Iraqi nation, as it felt that the oppressed Iraqi people are suffering from "additional tyranny." Similarly, the case of the Kuwaiti people should also be distinguished from the destructive al-Sabah regime, which should be answerable for supporting for eight years the criminal Iraqi regime and its treachery against the Islamic ummah.

Islamic Iran was the first country to call attention to humanitarian problems in the "oil war" and to the plight of the oppressed Iraqi people. Iran was the first country to draw international attention to the shortage of food and medicines and to drive home the fact that the war had exceeded the framework stipulated by the United Nations and that the aim of the aggressing Americans is to destroy Iraq's economic and industrial infrastructure and annihilate its people.

Once again, it was Islamic Iran who presented the first proposal to the Iraqi leaders for taking a realistic approach. Our president openly said he was willing to meet Saddam to resolve the issue and end the bloodshed and stated he would continue his efforts for peace without relaxing them for a moment until the war ended.

Now that the oil war has ended temporarily, the truth of this responsible position on the part of the Iranian authorities can be better understood. Saddam was not trustworthy and lacked all the qualities necessary to direct a war against Israel. In those crucial moments when sentiments ran high in the Islamic world because of U.S. atrocities, it was very difficult to make such a prognosis. The officials of Islamic Iran, however, clearly gauged "what was right" even in those circumstances, and acted accordingly. [passage omitted]

All nations must be vigilant and dash the hopes of the opportunists to prevent them from daring to capitalize on the pure sentiments of the Muslims, which have been aroused by the atrocities of the U.S. and NATO forces. Now that they have clearly identified their enemies, they should try with all their might to drive the powers of world arrogance from the heartland of the oil- rich regions of the Islamic world.

All kinds of ways to depict Saddam as the oppressed party and any justification of the treachery of the criminal of this file—regardless from which party it originates—will be a service to the enemies of Islam, a deviant action to deflect world public opinion and a danger that threatens the region and the world of Islam.

Today, the real issue is to drive the aggressive NATO forces from the region. Every effort which overshadows this issue will be a major service to the United States—something which the nations of the region would do well to comprehend and combat with greater vigilance.

Editorial Views Future Regional Security Plans

LD1003131691 Tehran IRNA in English 1202 GMT 10 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, March 10, IRNA—The Persian daily "JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI" Sunday commenting on the future security plan for the Persian Gulf region underlined that the security of the regional countries and that of the oppressing powers are totally two different subjects.

The daily's editorial believed that any regional security plan must guarantee the establishment of security and mutual trust among the regional countries, create a barrier against foreign enemies and provide security for the regional nations and the necessary stability for prosperity and development.

Stating that the need for establishment of a security system in the Persian Gulf is these days the subject of discussions, the paper reiterated that what the domination-seeking powers mean by a regional security plan is to create a defence shield to preserve their own illegitimate interests.

However, it added, the regional nations are after a solid defence shield which minimizes the vulnerability of each and every regional country and the whole of the reigon against any aggression from inside and outside.

Regretfully, efforts are underway to repeat the unsuccessful experience of the (Persian) Gulf Cooperation Council (PGCC) by reviving it through bringing in Egpyt and Syria.

The fact is that members of such a body are forming an anti-Iraqi Arab coalition. Once again a new security structure is being formed in alliance with the U.S. around the "common axis of enmity" against Iraq. "Common enmity" is not the right basis for forming a new regional security system, the editorial stressed adding that any attempt to ignore the root causes of the regional problems will lead to a new round of instability in the region.

The decade-long valuable experiences gained in the region makes it clear for the Persian Gulf countries that "the Islamic Iran is the anchor of the regional stability and that the Islamic Republic is the only country capable of playing the main role in maintaining the regional security."

The daily also reiterated that friendships or animosities based on agreements do not provide an enduring and trustworthy basis for establishing a successful security system.

It concluded that the case of Iraq should have given a lesson to the regional countries—the world oppressing powers are after their own interests when supporting a lackey regime for a certain period and dropping it when deem necessary.

The paper in another commentary wrote that the Damascus meeting fits into the new framework of the U.S. administration aimed at uniting moderate and compromising Arabs in the region. "In political terms, it is a subdivision of the Camp David plan," said the paper.

Washington's objective behind the military agreements between the emirates of the Persian Gulf with Egypt and Syria which have no common borders with each other is to form a [word indistinct] against the Islamic Republic of Iran. This serves two purposes. On the one hand it aims to prevent a possible unity between Iran and the Arab nations of the region and on the other hand to remove the chances of unity of the nations of these countries with the freedom-loving Muslims.

Meanwhile the scheme aims to distribute the oil income among the members of the new coalition thus freeing the U.S. from the financial burden of Egypt and instead shifting it to the Arab sheikhs.

As for Syria the question is what Damascus, a front line Arab state, plans to defend while the Zionist enemy continues to occupy its lands, asked the commentary.

Commentary Criticizes U.S. 'Double Standards'

LD1103234991 Tehran IRNA in English 1447 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, March 11, IRNA—A Persian daily Monday criticised global arrogance for its double standards in dealing with popular uprisings saying that its support for or condemnation of these movements depended on whether they were in line with its interests. In a political commentary, JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI said that it was a tradition of the world arrogance to welcome the suppression of movements which are against its interests and to defend as "the people's righteous demands" those which serve its illegitimate interests. Since the U.S., the Zionist regime and on the whole the enemies of Islam are concerned about any development having a trace of Islam, they associate them with foreign elements in order to legitimize the use of various suppressive means.

Comparing the U.S. attitude towards the popular uprisings in the Baltic republics of the Soviet Union, former East Germany, Romania, Poland and other East European countries on the one hand and those of Iraq, the Soviet Azerbaijan and Palestine on the other, the daily questioned Washington's intentions in deliberately associating the latter to "overseas" and lauds their suppression.

The White House and its allies originally explicitly supported Saddam's fall but when the Islamic identity of

the current uprising in Iraq became evident, they started retreating from their earlier stands.

The daily said that the demands of the oppressed people of Palestine are much stronger and more principled than those of the Baltic republics in the Soviet Union but since the U.S. interests are endangered in Palestine, people are massacred with the explicit consent of the White House. It stressed that whenever Muslims intended to defend their religious identity, they would be immediately attached to Iran and portrayed as a threat against others.

It said attempts are being made to link the Iraqi people's uprising to Iran with extensive propaganda being launched in this respect. However, if the Iraqi people had opted for a pro-arrogance government, their movement would be dubbed as a liberation seeking one. Referring to the blows inflicted on the Iraqi Government by world arrogance recently, the editorial said that if the Baghdad regime wanted to make faces at the arrogance it should put aside suppressing its people and instead take measures to meet people's demands.

Editorial Notes Postwar Problems Facing U.S.

NC1003145491 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 24 Feb 91 p 1

[Ahmadreza Darestani editorial: "The Problems Facing the United States After the War"]

[Text] The multinational ground assault against Iraq began at a time when efforts to achieve a peaceful settlement were under way at the Security Council. There can be no doubt that the United States was seeking a decisive victory in the Persian Gulf.

From the point of view of the White House echelons, such victory could only be achieved by inflicting ever more casualties and damage on Iraq's military forces and strategic installations, destroying the Iraqi Army in Kuwait, maintaining the international sanctions, and perhaps even using force against Baghdad until Saddam is toppled.

The United States imagined that a decisive victory would put it in an ideal position in the post-cold war era to consolidate its hegemony over oil in the Arabian Peninsula and Kuwait [as published]. It thought that this victory would also help it rein in the Europe of 1992 and obstruct any progress by the Islamic revolution.

The fact is, however, that while the United States may have achieved a superficial victory in the war against Iraq, it is not able to contend with its fundamental problems on the regional and international planes. The United States is facing problems in the Middle East which cannot be resolved by means of war or by resorting to military force.

The socio-political situation in Iraq and popular unrest in Palestine, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt are potentially war-spawning, but they can never be resolved by a war!

In the aftermath of the Persian Gulf war, the main concern of the United States is how it can shape regional security arrangements, but the decisive victory by the allies in the war against Iraq will not help it solve this predicament.

The United States has numerous problems in this regard. It is quite clear that the United States will not be able to establish a stable government in Kuwait so long as Saddam Husayn remains in power in Iraq, and instability in Kuwait will result in instability in other countries of the Arabian Peninsula. On the hand, would not any action by the allies to topple Saddam generate further crises and fan greater instability in the region?

In an effort to undermine Iraqi power in the region, will Egypt, Syria, and Turkey be able to create the pillars for a new axis to establish security in the region with financial backing from Saudi Arabia?

It must also be borne in mind that the Persian Gulf region is part of the larger and tempestuous southwest Asia area, and Westerners themselves know that maintaining security in the region by means of foreign forces will be very costly and very fragile.

The eagerness of impoverished Arab nations such as Yemen, Jordan, and Tunisia to share in the wealth of the oil-rich countries and the chronic problems resulting from the denial of Palestinian rights are among the other factors which contribute to instability in the region.

In truth, what power could ever hope to silence or freeze the Palestinian struggle (a struggle by a nation that has nothing left to lose)? Moreover, what power could ever hope to stifle the fervor of the Muslim nations of the region to participate in this hallowed struggle?

In any case, it should be stressed that if the Americans imagine they will be able to solve their problems in the region by using military force, they will be making the same mistake Saddam and the other Baghdad leaders made when they marched their Army into Kuwait.

U.S. Plan for 'Puppet Regime' in Iraq Attacked

NC1003153391 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 3 Mar 91 pp 1, 14

[Editorial: "Iraq and a Puppet Regime Installed by the United States"]

[Text] The next move the United States will make in the region will be to attempt to impose a puppet regime on Iraq, toward which end the United States will use various political, military, and economic levers. From the political point of view, the United States has already transformed the Security Council into an instrument to further its hegemonistic objectives.

In its latest resolution against Iraq, the Security Council imposed a food embargo on this country. This is an clear sign that the pressures on Iraq will continue until there is a change of regime there. The Security Council has acted in this way, although its real duty is to preserve peace and security in the world and it lacks any authority to take measures which could culminate in a change of government.

Now that Iraq has withdrawn from Kuwait with its Army considerably weakened, according to U.S. military officials, and now that large parts of Iraqi territory are occupied, what other purpose can such stringent UN embargoes have but bringing about a change of regime?

Neither the United States nor the other permanent members of the Security Council have the right to impose such a government on the people of Iraq. The Iraqi people alone have the right to determine their destiny.

The regional nations will never forget the blatant injustice perpetrated by the Security Council. They will never forget how the United Nations accorded official recognition to the Zionist regime and did nothing to prevent the recurrent expansionist activities of the regime occupying Jerusalem. Under Resolution 242, the West Bank and Gaza Strip should have been given to the Palestinians, but they remain in the hands of the Zionists and the Security Council has done nothing to restore even a part of Palestinian territory to its rightful owners!

Militarily, the United States will continue and expand its occupation of Iraqi territory, so that it can install an interim government. Nationalists have already congregated in Saudi Arabia to form such a government. It appears that one of the objectives of the direct talks between the Iraqi military commanders and the high-level U.S. military officials is to drive a wedge between the Iraqi commanders and Saddam Husayn and persuade them to rebel against him.

Because the United States has no base among the Iraqi nation, the Americans' only hope lies in the Armed Forces, who can set up a dictatorial government with the help of some like-minded politicians.

From an economic point of view, the United States and its allies have transformed Iraq into a devastated country that will have to consign its oil revenue to reconstruction for many years to come. In addition, Iraq has agreed to pay war reparations, but it is clear that it cannot bear heavy payments. If it becomes unable or unwilling to make these payments, the pressure will continue until the government is changed. In any event, Iraq will be forced to export large quantities of oil to rebuild itself; this in itself will serve to bring about a slump in oil prices.

In fact, the United States and its allies should be held responsible for the destruction of Iraq's economic structure, just as Iraq is responsible for the destruction of Kuwait's oil installations.

U.S. Security Goals in Middle East Considered

NC1103165991 Tehran ETTELAAT in Persian 3 Mar 91 pp 2, 16

[Abolqasem Qasemzadeh commentary: "Cease-Fire in the 'War of Weapons'; Use of the 'Weapons of War']

[Excerpts] "Independence," "Peace," "Liberation," "Security," are terms that are being used by the U.S. President in every one of his speeches. [passage omitted] It is interesting to note that even prior to the amir of Kuwait and his Cabinet, the British ambassador in Kuwait was the first political and diplomatic figure to enter Kuwait by helicopter after the cease-fire and settle in the British Embassy—even before the Kuwait flag and the flags of the United States and Britain were hoisted over their respective embassies.

Of course, nothing else could be expected, since the gift of liberation and independence had been bestowed by the British and the Americans. The phase of using "weapons" reached an end with the destruction of the Iraqi military machine, and now the stage of using the "weapon of war" by the West has begun, led by the United States for furthering its future policy and planning in the Middle East, which George Bush refers to as "a new world order" in the aftermath of the cold war era.

These days, the most important topic being discussed by Western echelons is "security in the Middle East," which was addressed by the talks at the Washington session of the foreign ministers of the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan.

The first Western objective under the leadership of the United States for the preservation of security in the Middle East is the maintenance of a politico-military equilibrium favoring the interests of Israel. This positive equilibrium is to be established at the end of the "war of weapons." The Americans and their Western allies have a special definition for security in the Persian Gulf which will naturally enable the West, spearheaded by the United States, to freely extract energy (oil, and other minerals), with the free flow of Western capital and products to and from the region's countries in the form of guaranteed deposits in the multinational banks, and guaranteed political and economic stability for Israel. In the opinion of the White House, this definition of security encompasses all the above objectives. [passage omitted]

In the regional countries, all the governments desire security—except those countries that see the strength and perpetuation of their power in being dependent on their American and British mentors. This is because the definition of security in the lexicon of these governments is in conformity with the definition and desires of the West, spearheaded by the United States. For these governments, security implies leasing out their independence or a sort of rented independence in order to continue in power.

Thus far, the following two prerequisites have been specified regarding security in the interest of the Muslim peoples of the region:

1. The departure of foreign forces from the region.
2. The establishment of security by the regional countries.

These two conditions are not adequate in themselves, even though they are essential for the security of the region. These two concepts have a different interpretation for the British and the Americans, regarding their deployment of troops in the region for the alleged liberation of Kuwait, and their military presence in the region. They have declared that they will not depart from the region, and that only part of their ground forces and a limited number of their warplanes and gargantuan warships will leave.

Of course, George Bush, who is to begin his presidential campaign at the end of 1991, and John Major, the Conservative Party's prime minister who has newly come to power, and whose party needs to win in the elections against the Labor Party—both need a ceremonial parade of their "victorious" soldiers.

In view of the approaching pilgrimage season, the Saudi Government as well does not have the capacity for a prolonged and long-term presence of 550,000 Western soldiers on its territory, especially in view of the danger to their lives in their country. Thus, the return of these troops does not mean the military evacuation of these forces from the region. Most of the Arab countries of the region even welcome the military presence of the United States and Britain as they fear a coup d'etat against their governments.

In such circumstances, the attainment of the means for security on the basis of independence and freedom seems very difficult. On the one hand, the Zionist regime, with its Zionist and racist ideas and its desire of a region "from the Nile to the Euphrates" with military predominance, has the complete support of the West led by the United States, which in itself poses the greatest threat to the region. On the other hand, while governments do not have independence and in practice are mere puppets of the United States and Britain, they will continue to consider themselves safe under their security umbrella.

The utilization of these weapons of war is for the purpose of implementing the policies of the United States in the region; that is, a Lebanese-Syrian solution, which envisages talks between Israeli and Syria, and the return of the Golan Heights; the Jordanian-Palestinian solution; the Palestinian issue with the relocation of Soviet Jews in Israel; signing of new regional pacts; the expansion of the Gulf Cooperation Council and its merger with the international Western pacts; control and domination over OPEC, with the decisive and balanced role of the West in controlling the production and price of oil; the resolving of problems of the moderate governments, bringing them closer to Israel; and finally and most important of all, to stem the growth of Islamic fundamentalism and the spread of the Islamic revolution. All the above collectively constitute the future of the U.S.-led West's perspective and its definition of security in the Middle East.

Pakistan

President on Air Force Role in Gulf Aftermath

BK0903140891 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1300 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Text] The president, Mr. Ghulam Ishaq Khan, has said continued advancement in the power, efficiency and discipline of the Air Force is indispensable for making the country's defense impregnable. The president was addressing a ceremony at PAF [Pakistan Air Force] base, Chaklala, to mark the relinquishment of command of the PAF by Air Chief Marshal Hakimullah to Air Marshal Farooq Feroze Khan. The prime minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, and the chairman of Senate, Mr. Wasim Sajjad, were present at the ceremony. The president said the recent Gulf war has brought out the importance of the Air Force in a very pronounced manner and it has been proved as an inescapable reality that its power, skill, and discipline need to be continually improved to make the defense impregnable.

Lauds Foreign Policy, Sees No Change

BK1203120791 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Excerpt] The president, Mr. Ghulam Ishaq Khan, has identified three main areas of concern, which should be addressed by a national conservation policy for the protection of natural environment. He was inaugurating a seminar on nature conservation and environment protection in Islamabad today. The first, he said, is the inadequate protection of wild species; the second is the insufficiency of safeguards against the degradation and destruction of habitats. Lastly, he said a conservation policy must have [words indistinct] for full and quick enforcement of the law.

Talking to newsmen, the president expressed his satisfaction at the functioning of the present National Assembly and said it has done more legislation over the past few days than previous assembly. The president said he is not aware of any horse-trading in the Senate elections. He said if it is going on, it is condemnable.

About Pakistan's foreign policy over the Gulf issue, he said it had proved successful and everybody had appreciated it. There is, therefore, no scope for any change in it.

About President Bush's appreciation of general elections in Pakistan, the president said our free, fair, and orderly conduct of polls had received appreciation everywhere.

Japanese Envoy Urges Nuclear Treaty Signing

OW1103114891 Tokyo KYODO in English 1037 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Text] Islamabad, March 11 KYODO—Japanese economic assistance to Pakistan will continue despite the termination of U.S. aid but Pakistan should sign the nuclear weapons nonproliferation treaty to make things easier, Japan's ambassador to Islamabad told reporters Monday. The United States suspended its military and economic assistance to Pakistan last October because of Islamabad's nuclear program.

Ambassador Kunio Muraoka said Tokyo also wants friendly countries to adhere to a policy of nuclear nonproliferation, but that Tokyo is not prepared to use aid as a lever to achieve the objective.

Asked if Japan would be willing to sell a nuclear power plant to Pakistan if it agrees to sign the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, he said Pakistan's signature of it would completely alter the situation and that U.S. firms would also step forward if Pakistan signs on.

Radiation, Nuclear Safety Rules Promulgated

BK1003092991 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 10 Mar 91

[Text] The government has promulgated nuclear and radiation safety regulations to ensure the application and standardization of nuclear safeguards. The regulations, which were drawn up in accordance with internationally recognized nuclear safeguard standards, are designed to protect people who work in an atmosphere of radiation, as well as the public and the environment. The regulations will apply to the use of radioactive materials in industry, agriculture, and medicine, including nuclear power stations and X-ray machines.

Meanwhile, the government has agreed to the application of the international scale [preceding word in English] for the prevention of nuclear accidents. This scale was prepared by the International Atomic Energy Agency and the OECD's nuclear agency for reporting nuclear accidents all over the world.

Editorial Assails U.S. Position Toward Iraq

BK1203090491 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 12 Mar 91 p 6

[Editorial: "World Bully at It Again"]

[Text] True to its assumed character of world policeman, indeed world bully, the United States of America has warned Iraq of air strikes against any Iraqi military unit which "uses poison gas against rebels" now reportedly battling President Saddam Husayn's forces. The American concern for the dissenting portion of the Iraqi populace is most touching. Especially in view of the fact that less than three weeks back, U.S.-led air forces were indiscriminately and mercilessly subjecting the entire Iraqi population to the worst aerial bombing in the history of modern warfare. The question arises: The Gulf War having receded into history, a ceasefire having been affected, by what logic on earth does the U.S. arrogate to itself the right to issue dire warnings to Baghdad. Or any internal issue, for that matter?

If the United States thinks it has to have its blood-tainted finger in every international pie purely on the strength of its size and might it is clearly transgressing the limits of law and bounds of moral propriety. If Iraq is in violation of international law, the U.S. can always go to the United Nations and make a complaint against human rights violations wherever it thinks they have occurred. The UN has a role to play in world affairs and it is the only forum to which complaints of this nature should be made. In fact, the world body was formed in order to arbitrate and mediate in just such affairs. The United States has apparently come to think, that it in itself constitutes the sole judge and executioner of the whole world, regardless of whether other nations resent and resist its poking its nose into their affairs. In the circumstances, how can anyone help but recall the fable of the wolf and the lamb?

To begin with, what proof does the United States have that chemical weapons are being used or imminently likely to be used by Baghdad against any section of its dissident population? Assuming that the U.S. does have such proof, what gives it the right to threaten unilateral action? It should present the proof it has to the Security Council and request that forum to ask Baghdad to desist from whatever human rights violations it alleges. It would also be appropriate if Washington realised, no matter how belatedly, that the Palestinians and the Kashmiris have as much rights as people anywhere else in the world. Any concentrated search of the memory would be bound to fail in unearthing a single instance where the mighty United States has stood up for the rights of these two people who have been brutally repressed by the Zionists and the Indians. Would it be too much to ask President Bush why he thinks he can be two-faced and yet expect international opinion to endorsed his disreputable double standards? As of the moment, might may be right but in the ultimate analysis, the latter is bound to triumph.